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No. 50

House of Representatives

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HOLDING).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
April 15, 2013.

I hereby appoint the Honorable GEORGE E. B. HOLDING to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 3, 2013, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes each, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 1:50 p.m.

SENIOR HUNGER IN AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, for the past 2 months, I have been speaking each week about hunger in America. Today, I want to focus on hunger among our senior citizens, which is a silent scourge in our Nation.

Over 49 million Americans are hungry; and of those, 8.3 million are seniors. That's one in seven seniors and nearly 15 percent of everyone over 60 years old. In fact, from 2001 to 2009,

hunger among Americans over the age of 50 increased by nearly 80 percent—80 percent. That is unconscionable.

One reason for this significant rise in senior hunger is the economy. The recession has made hunger in America worse for everyone, and it's been particularly bad among people between the ages of 50 and 59, a population too young for Social Security and Medicare, but too old for programs that target families with children. And it's not just the very poor. In fact, between 2007 and 2009, the most dramatic increase in hunger was among those whose annual incomes were twice the poverty line.

Food—good, healthy food—is important at all ages, but it is critical for young children and for senior citizens. For kids, nutritious food is critical for physical and mental development. For seniors, good, healthy food is critical for entirely different, but no less important, reasons.

Hunger can exacerbate existing medical conditions, and many medications need to be taken with food. Taking some medicine on an empty stomach can result in illness or hospitalization, problems that not only result in increased medical costs, but can also be deadly to people with reduced immune systems.

A common problem is that many seniors are homebound, unable to travel to grocery stores or food banks to get food. A homebound senior can be a forgotten senior. It's easy to see why senior hunger is a hidden problem. In many cases, the hungry senior is literally hidden away behind a closed door.

That's why it is so important to have senior advocacy groups like AARP, the National Council on Aging, and AmpleHarvest.org—to name a few—who focus on senior hunger. AARP has its Drive to End Hunger campaign with NASCAR and Jeff Gordon. The National Council on Aging is working with Feeding America and other food

banks to prioritize and target hunger among seniors. AmpleHarvest.org is working with seniors to grow their own food. And of course, there is Meals on Wheels, which delivers food directly to homebound seniors.

A recent Brown University report found that for every additional \$25 a State spends on Meals on Wheels each year for a person over 65, the low-care nursing home population decreases by 1 percent. That helps save Medicaid dollars and lowers health care costs overall.

In fact, the cost of feeding a senior for 1 year through Meals on Wheels is roughly equal to the cost of just 1 day in the hospital. And the average patient stays in the hospital for almost 5 days. Funding for Meals on Wheels is an important investment to decreasing health care spending.

I also want to highlight the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, which helps more than 860,000 seniors who make less than \$15,000 per year to have access to local fresh fruits and vegetables at farmers markets. A qualified senior is awarded between \$20 and \$50 to spend at their local farmers markets. Over 19,000 farmers participate and benefit from the money seniors spend through this program.

Wholesome Wave is an organization that doubles the purchasing power of the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program. Its Double Value Coupon program operates at more than 300 farmers markets in 26 States and the District of Columbia. Boston Mayor Tom Menino has a similar program called the Boston Bounty Bucks. These programs allow low-income seniors on fixed incomes to buy more fresh fruits and vegetables with their limited funds.

Mr. Speaker, these are terrific programs, but they simply can't do it all. In the case of senior hunger, we need to make sure that groups like Meals on Wheels and programs like Senior

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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Farmers' Market Nutrition Program are well funded. But we also need to work with doctors and nurses, with Medicare and Medicaid, and with other health care professionals to treat hunger as a health issue. We need to prevent costly hospital readmissions that are preventable with proper nutrition. We need to ensure that seniors aren't falling through the cracks and that they aren't going hungry.

Mr. Speaker, we need Presidential leadership to End Hunger Now, and we need a White House conference on food and nutrition to talk about senior hunger; to brainstorm, plan, and execute a national antihunger plan that will truly end hunger now.

We are the most prosperous Nation in the world. There is absolutely no reason why anyone should go hungry in the United States of America. It is especially shameful that so many older people, people who have made this country great, find themselves in a position where they are hungry. We can do something about it. I hope we come together, and I hope we end hunger now.

CHAINED CPI

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, there's a lot of talk in Washington, D.C., about something called chained CPI. A lot of people don't know what that means. We have assurances from the White House and the Republicans who originated this idea. It's an innocuous sort of little change to Social Security, veterans benefits, and other programs, because we overstate inflation in the CPI.

Actually, particularly for seniors, the reverse is true. The consumer price index, as measured, significantly understates inflation that impacts seniors because seniors have a different buying pattern than 20-year-olds. They're not out buying the latest iPhone. They're buying a lot of medical care, going up much faster than measured inflation, pharmaceuticals going up at phenomenal, obscene rates. Housing, energy, and all those things make up a bigger percentage of their budget in retirement.

For years, I have proposed legislation to accurately measure the cost of living for seniors, which actually would increase their annual cost-of-living adjustments. But now come the White House and the Republicans to say we're overstating inflation. Let's just use chained CPI, it doesn't matter, it's all about substitution. If they can't afford beef, they'll do chicken; if they can't do chicken, they'll do pasta; if they can't do pasta, they'll buy dog food; if they can't afford that, they'll starve. That's kind of the bottom line of these pointy-headed economists out there on how these sort of weird theories work.

Here's a graphic that demonstrates this a little better. This shows for a retired single woman, widowed or other-

wise, how much food would be lost on an annual basis with chained CPI as it eats away at the annual adjustments and the things that she purchases go up faster and faster.

□ 1210

Each shopping cart represents a weekly food budget of \$53. That's not exactly living high on the hog here. At 65, she loses 2 weeks of food. And a woman retiring at age 65 this year has a life expectancy of 20 years. That means at age 85, with this new device, the chained CPI, she would lose 16 weeks worth of her food budget. That's 16 weeks.

Everybody, as they get older, works through their savings and other means of support. And if you live too long, you're going to have a really hard time making ends meet. If we chain the CPI, it will get even harder for the next generation of seniors.

There's kind of a mixed message here. Republicans want to cut entitlements. They never supported Social Security and Medicare, but they just want to cut them to make sure they're there in the future. Well, if you chain the CPI, Social Security, which is supposed to have adequate benefits to pay full guaranteed benefits until 2033, would pick up 2 years. So we cut benefits for 100 percent of seniors retiring now and in the future, and Social Security would last 2 years longer. That doesn't exactly save Social Security, does it?

On the converse, with my plan, where we lift the cap so that people who earn a \$1 million or \$2 million or one of those hedge fund guys earning a billion dollars a year would pay Social Security tax on all of his or her income, we add 50 years to the life of Social Security. That's about as far as you can measure it into the future.

If they wanted to save Social Security, if that's what the White House is up to, if that's what the Republicans are up to, it's a much better way to do it without penalizing seniors. But that's not really what it's about. It's to take a program, Social Security, which is self-funding, doesn't draw on the general fund, doesn't create any deficit, it's to take money from Social Security and use it elsewhere to plug holes in our budget.

That's not right. It's the highest tax paid by many American workers to the Federal Government. Almost half of workers pay more in Social Security taxes, particularly the self-employed, than they do income taxes to the Federal Government. And if you earn over \$112,000 a year, your tax rate goes down. If you get \$1,200,000, your tax rate is one-tenth that of someone who earns \$50,000 a year; \$12 million, one one-hundredth; and those billionaires are paying less than 1 second's wages in Social Security taxes.

If you want to fix the program, lift the cap and make everybody pay the same percentage of their income into Social Security, but don't pretend by

taking food out of the mouths of seniors in the future that you're fixing the problem for full funding of Social Security beyond 2033. You're not. That's a lie. Admit what you're doing. You want to cut benefits to seniors, to veterans and other working Americans with this chained CPI artifice.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 13 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WENSTRUP) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

Almighty God of the universe, we give You thanks for giving us another day. We thank You that You give us a share in Your creative work, having endowed each with unique and important talents.

On this day, we ask Your blessing on the men and women of the people's House who have been entrusted with the care of this great Nation's people. Because of the great blessings You have bestowed on our Nation, may we embrace the opportunity to build a better world beyond our borders as well.

May all that we do this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

WE NEED A FAIRER, SIMPLER TAX CODE

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, today is tax day. This year, millions of Americans spent more time than ever before preparing their taxes as a result of ObamaCare's 21 new tax increases, which added up to more than \$1 trillion, destroying jobs.

The Tax Code is extremely complex, with over 4 million words, and is comprised of over 74,000 pages. House Republicans understand that we need to reform the Tax Code to make it more fair and simple.

Our budget proposal, the Path to Prosperity, not only repeals ObamaCare and the job-destroying taxes associated with it, it also reforms our Tax Code to encourage new jobs by small businesses. By simplifying our Tax Code, closing loopholes, and lowering rates, small businesses will be able to begin hiring again and increase wages for American workers.

The Presidential and Senate budget plans keep ObamaCare taxes in place and advocate for billions in new taxes. Raising taxes takes money from small businesses and destroys jobs.

I encourage the Senate and the President to begin working with House Republicans to clean up the Tax Code, rather than increasing regulations and taxes that will destroy jobs.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

HONORING THE VICTIMS OF THE VIRGINIA TECH SHOOTING

(Mr. TIERNEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. TIERNEY. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to remember the tragic shooting at Virginia Tech. Seven years ago tomorrow our country lost more than 30 lives, many of them college students with their entire future stretching out before them.

One of those students was Ross Alameddine, who lived in Saugus, which is in my district. He was loved by his family and friends, and is remembered by countless more. I've had the honor to talk with his mother, Lynnette Alameddine, and have seen, firsthand, how she has turned her sorrow into action, working to prevent other tragedies like the one that took her child, and to protect all of our children, our sons and daughters.

And she's not alone. In recent months we've seen the strength of moms and dads across the country. Americans were mobilized in joining together to demand action, to ensure that Congress passes responsible legislation to reduce gun violence.

In my district alone, some 500 people in the last few days have joined me online to demand action on commonsense legislation. Through my Web site, Facebook, and Twitter, hundreds of parents and grandparents and students have added their names to the hundreds of thousands of voices across the country calling on Speaker BOEHNER to

bring legislation to the House floor to reduce gun violence.

We cannot let some in Congress block action. We all deserve a vote.

OUR TAX SYSTEM IS BROKEN

(Mr. RICE of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RICE of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, this week, as hardworking Americans across the country submit their tax returns, we are all reminded of the heavy burden placed upon all taxpayers by our country's broken tax system.

Like a snowball rolling down a hill, the United States Tax Code has grown and bloated itself over time, resulting in an avalanche of overregulation coming down on the heads of American taxpayers.

There have been over 4,400 changes to the Tax Code in the last decade alone. That averages to more than one per day. Is it any surprise, then, that the United States boasts more tax preparers than we do police officers and firefighters combined?

We're facing a four-alarm tax emergency in this country, and the House Republicans have a plan to address it. We stand committed to fundamental, comprehensive tax reform that makes our Tax Code fairer and simpler for all Americans, a Tax Code that makes our corporations more competitive, that will stop the hemorrhaging of American jobs overseas and bring jobs back to our shores.

Tax reform would increase hardworking Americans' take-home pay so that they have more money to live on, instead of the government having more of their money to spend.

Mr. Speaker, that's what American taxpayers deserve.

CONGRATULATING HOPWOOD JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL ON ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY

(Mr. SABLAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, 50 years ago, the first school to offer secondary education in the Northern Mariana Islands was officially named Hopwood Junior-Senior High School, in honor of Admiral Herbert Gladstone Hopwood, commander-in-chief of the Pacific Fleet.

In 1969, when a senior high school opened, the name was shortened to Hopwood Junior High School. But the school itself expanded. It now has the second-largest student body of any Northern Marianas school, serving nearly 1,200 young scholars.

Facilities expanded to vocational education buildings; an alternative school, Lina'la Malawasch Academy; and a performing arts building.

Hopwood's motto is: "We Make Every Day the Best." This upbeat attitude is

reflected in a record of performance, including awards in regional forensic and theater competitions, spelling bees, and Academic Challenge Bowls.

From humble beginnings in 1949, to this day, Hopwood has served a vital role in the lives of our students and our communities. I have great confidence the school will continue to distinguish itself in the years to come.

Congratulations to the Hopwood Hilitais.

FLAWED IMMIGRATION PROPOSAL

(Mr. SMITH of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the Senate's immigration proposal contains a fatal flaw. It legalizes almost everyone in the country illegally, amnesty, before it secures the border.

As a result, the Senate proposal issues an open invitation to enter the country illegally. Millions more will do so before the border is secure. The Senate proposal would dramatically increase illegal immigration.

The non-partisan Government Accountability Office found that only 6 percent of the U.S.-Mexico border is under full control of the Border Patrol. And 40 percent of all illegal immigrants are visa overstayers. Yet, the Senate proposal legalizes almost everyone in the country before a system is set up to identify the visa overstayers.

The Senate proposal amounts to amnesty first, border security later, if ever. It is fatally flawed.

□ 1410

TAX REFORM II

(Mr. WENSTRUP asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WENSTRUP. It's that time of year again. Folks back in my district and all across America have had to part ways with our hard-earned money as we send our taxes off to Washington. How long did it take you just to figure out the complicated tax forms and get everything together just to file your returns? It takes the average American 13 hours. Not the best use of your time, is it? But, then, it's not hard to imagine when you consider that our Tax Code contains over 70,000 pages of regulations.

That's not the tax system that our fellow Americans deserve. We need a Tax Code that is fairer and simpler for everyone—families, students, business owners, and all hardworking taxpayers. That's the kind of comprehensive tax reform that the House Republicans want to enact.

TAXES AND THE BUDGET

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. National taxpayer advocate Nina E. Olson lists “complexity in the Tax Code” as “the number one most serious problem facing taxpayers.” At about 4 million words in length, it’s not hard to see why. Our Tax Code is four times wordier than the Bible, minus the grace and mercy. It’s so complex and intimidating that 60 percent of Americans pay good money just to have someone else tell them how much the government is going to take from them. Families spend more on taxes today than on food, clothing, and housing combined.

We should be working to lighten that burden. A simpler, fairer Tax Code will help families save more and empower employers to pay their workers more and create new jobs. A Tax Code that doesn’t require taxpayers to own a secret decoder ring or hire a legal team is the kind of reform we’re working on in the House of Representatives. A commonsense Tax Code will make the difference in the lives of taxpayers, and that’s what this Congress should strive toward.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 5 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 2 o’clock and 12 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1701

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HOLDING) at 5 o’clock and 1 minute p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE IMPROVEMENT ACT

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1162) to amend title 31, United States Code, to make improvements in the Government Accountability Office, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.
The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1162

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Government Accountability Office Improvement Act”.

SEC. 2. GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE IMPROVEMENT.

(a) AUTHORITY TO OBTAIN INFORMATION.—

(1) AUTHORITY TO OBTAIN RECORDS.—Section 716 of title 31, United States Code, is amended in subsection (a)—

(A) by striking “(a)” and inserting “(2)”; and

(B) by inserting after the section heading the following:

“(a)(1) The Comptroller General is authorized to obtain such agency records as the Comptroller General requires to discharge his duties (including audit, evaluation, and investigative duties), including through the bringing of civil actions under this section. In reviewing a civil action under this section, the court shall recognize the continuing force and effect of the authorization in the preceding sentence until such time as the authorization is repealed pursuant to law.”.

(2) COPIES.—Section 716(a) of title 31, United States Code, as amended by subsection (a), is further amended in the second sentence of paragraph (2) by striking “inspect an agency record” and inserting “inspect, and make and retain copies of, an agency record”.

(b) ADMINISTERING OATHS.—Section 711 of title 31, United States Code, is amended by striking paragraph (4) and inserting the following:

“(4) administer oaths to witnesses when auditing and settling accounts and, with the prior express approval of the Comptroller General, when investigating fraud or attempts to defraud the United States, or irregularity or misconduct of an employee or agent of the United States.”.

(c) ACCESS TO CERTAIN INFORMATION.—

(1) ACCESS TO CERTAIN INFORMATION.—Subchapter II of chapter 7 of title 31, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“§ 721. Access to certain information

“(a) No provision of the Social Security Act, including section 453(1) of that Act (42 U.S.C. 653(1)), shall be construed to limit, amend, or supersede the authority of the Comptroller General to obtain any information or to inspect or copy any record under section 716 of this title.

“(b) No provision of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, including section 301(j) of that Act (21 U.S.C. 331(j)), shall be construed to limit, amend, or supersede the authority of the Comptroller General to obtain any information or to inspect or copy any record under section 716 of this title.

“(c)(1) The Comptroller General shall prescribe such policies and procedures as are necessary to protect from public disclosure proprietary or trade secret information obtained consistent with this section.

“(2) Nothing in this section shall be construed to—

“(A) alter or amend the prohibitions against the disclosure of trade secret or other sensitive information prohibited by section 1905 of title 18 and other applicable laws; or

“(B) affect the applicability of section 716(e) of this title, including the protections against unauthorized disclosure contained in that section, to information obtained consistent with this section.

“(d) Specific references to statutes in this section shall not be construed to affect access by the Government Accountability Office to information under statutes that are not so referenced.”.

(2) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 7 of title 31, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 720 the following:

“721. Access to certain information.”.

(d) AGENCY REPORTS.—Section 720(b) of title 31, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by inserting “or planned” after “action taken”; and

(2) by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following:

“(1) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate, the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives, the congressional committees with jurisdiction over the agency program or activity that is the subject of the recommendation, and the Government Accountability Office before the 61st day after the date of the report; and”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) each will control 20 minutes.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ISSA. I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

As you know, the Government Accountability Office is a legislative branch agency that investigates how the Federal Government spends taxpayer dollars. Often called the “congressional watchdog,” the GAO investigates instances of waste, fraud, and abuse in the Federal Government. My committee has direct jurisdiction over the GAO.

Congress must have current information on how Federal programs are performing in order to both legislate and effectively conduct meaningful oversight.

H.R. 1162, the GAO Improvement Act, will enhance the GAO’s ability to serve Congress primarily by ensuring the agency has access to key data warehoused in the executive branch.

This bill ensures that the GAO has access to the National Directory of New Hires, which is used to verify eligibility for Federal programs, to detect or prevent fraud, and to identify improper payments.

H.R. 1162 will ensure the GAO has the ability to obtain agency records and to administer oaths to witnesses when auditing accounts and investigating fraud.

It will allow the Comptroller General to seek judicial remedy to enforce GAO’s right to information under the law.

GAO has an exemplary record of protecting sensitive government information, including national security documents. The committee is confident that GAO, a nonpartisan portion of the legislative branch, will continue to vigorously maintain confidentiality regarding information it obtains.

I want to note that the language in this bill was included in previous

versions of the DATA Act that was approved unanimously by the House in the last Congress.

I want to additionally thank the ranking member, Mr. CUMMINGS, for his partnership in this issue. No matter which of us holds the gavel, we together know that the information we base our decisions on, the information critical to the American people, has a balance of time that we must realize must be sooner and not later.

The ranking member and I absolutely support this bill in its current form because we know that fresh information is critically important if we're to make our decisions well timely.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I first just want to dedicate a moment or two to our fellow citizens up in Boston who are going through some very traumatic times right now. The fact that bombs have gone off in Boston, that sadly there have been fatalities and sadly many people have been injured, our prayers go out to our fellow citizens, to the first responders, and we pray that this matter will be resolved in a way that brings anybody who brings harm to anyone to justice.

With that, Mr. Speaker, on the subject of the bill, I rise in strong support of this bill.

I want to associate myself with the words of our chairman, Mr. ISSA. This is truly indeed a bipartisan bill. As to the contents of the bill, GAO assists Congress in identifying waste, fraud, and abuse in Federal programs and recommending ways to make government work better.

Because of its vital role, GAO needs unfettered access to Federal agencies. Efforts by executive branch officials to withhold information from GAO unfortunately impede Congress' ability to legislate effectively. And I will say it over and over again, as long as I live, we need to be effective and efficient in everything we do on this Earth. This is an effort to make sure that we can be just that, more effective and efficient.

The Government Accountability Office Improvement Act will increase the effectiveness of GAO by clarifying and strengthening its authority in several critical areas, including access to records.

The GAO Improvement Act addresses a Federal court decision in *Walker v. Cheney* that limited GAO's ability to question agency access determinations in court.

The bill provides the Comptroller General, with express authority from Congress, to pursue litigation if the Comptroller General determines that the performance of her official duties is harmed when an agency improperly withholds information.

The bill also clarifies GAO's access to information in other key areas by confirming GAO's right to make and retain copies of records, authorizing the

GAO to administer oaths in certain circumstances and specifically granting GAO access to certain information.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, the bill creates a reporting mechanism so that Congress will be more fully informed when agencies do not cooperate with GAO.

I introduced similar legislation to this bill in the last Congress which passed the House as a provision of H.R. 2146, the DATA Act, to which it was added at my request.

Again, I want to thank the chairman of the committee for his cooperation in getting the bill to the floor, and I urge Members to pass H.R. 1162.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I now will place in the record a letter from the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee supporting the bill, but recognizing that the primary jurisdiction over this database belongs to the Ways and Means Committee, and we are responding in the affirmative for that.

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, April 15, 2013.

Hon. DARRELL ISSA,
Chairman, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN ISSA, On March 20, 2013, the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform reported H.R. 1162, the Government Accountability Office Improvement Act, favorably to the House. Section 2, dealing with authority to access the National Directory of New Hires in Section 453 of the Social Security Act, touches the jurisdiction of the Committee on Ways and Means. As a result of your having consulted with the Committee concerning the provision of the bill that falls within our Rule X jurisdiction, I agree not to seek a sequential referral so that the bill may proceed expeditiously to the House floor.

The Committee on Ways and Means takes this action with the mutual understanding that, by forgoing consideration of H.R. 1162 at this time, we do not waive any jurisdiction over the subject matter contained in this or similar legislation, and the Committee will be appropriately consulted and involved as the bill or similar legislation moves forward so that we may address any remaining issues that fall within our Rule X jurisdiction. The Committee also reserves the right to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this or similar legislation, and requests your support for such request.

Finally, I would appreciate your response to this letter confirming this understanding, and would ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the Congressional Record during floor consideration thereof.

Sincerely,

DAVE CAMP,
Chairman.

Before I recognize the next speaker, I would ask that the House take a moment to recognize the loss of life in Boston as this tragedy continues to unfold.

□ 1710

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, we have no further requests for time, and I am prepared to close unless there are further speakers on the other side.

Mr. CUMMINGS. We have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ISSA. Then I think we both ask for favorable consideration, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. Issa) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1162, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER VACANCY ACT

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1246) to amend the District of Columbia Home Rule Act to provide that the District of Columbia Treasurer or one of the Deputy Chief Financial Officers of the Office of the Chief Financial Officer of the District of Columbia may perform the functions and duties of the Office in an acting capacity if there is a vacancy in the Office.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1246

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "District of Columbia Chief Financial Officer Vacancy Act".

SEC. 2. AUTHORIZING DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA TREASURER OR DEPUTY CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER OF OFFICE OF CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA TO SERVE AS ACTING CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER IN EVENT OF VACANCY IN OFFICE.

(a) AUTHORIZING SERVICE IN ACTING CAPACITY IN EVENT OF VACANCY IN OFFICE.—Section 424(b) of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act (sec. 1-204.24(b), D.C. Official Code) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

"(3) AUTHORIZING TREASURER OR DEPUTY CFO TO PERFORM DUTIES IN ACTING CAPACITY IN EVENT OF VACANCY IN OFFICE.—

"(A) SERVICE AS CFO.—

"(i) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in clause (ii), if there is a vacancy in the Office of Chief Financial Officer because the Chief Financial Officer has died, resigned, or is otherwise unable to perform the functions and duties of the Office—

"(I) the District of Columbia Treasurer shall serve as the Chief Financial Officer in an acting capacity, subject to the time limitation of subparagraph (B); or

"(II) the Mayor may direct one of the Deputy Chief Financial Officers of the Office referred to in subparagraphs (A) through (D) of subsection (a)(3) to serve as the Chief Financial Officer in an acting capacity, subject to the time limitation of subparagraph (B).

“(i) EXCLUSION OF CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS.—Notwithstanding clause (i), an individual may not serve as the Chief Financial Officer under such clause if the individual did not serve as the District of Columbia Treasurer or as one of such Deputy Chief Financial Officers of the Office of the Chief Financial Officer (as the case may be) for at least 90 days during the 1-year period which ends on the date the vacancy occurs.

“(B) TIME LIMITATION.—A vacancy in the Office of the Chief Financial Officer may not be filled by the service of any individual in an acting capacity under subparagraph (A) after the expiration of the 210-day period which begins on the date the vacancy occurs.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 424(b)(2)(D) of such Act (sec. 1-204.24(b)(2)(D), D.C. Official Code) is amended by striking “Any vacancy” and inserting “Subject to paragraph (3), any vacancy”.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this Act shall apply with respect to vacancies occurring on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) and the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

As chairman of the committee with oversight and responsibility over the District of Columbia, from time to time it comes to our attention that the Home Rule Act and other legislation that has governed the Federal City needs to be updated. In this case, because of the work of Delegate HOLMES NORTON, we became aware of a potentially dangerous flaw within existing law.

On February 1, Dr. Gandhi, the long-standing District of Columbia chief financial officer, announced that he will retire on June 1. Subsequently, Ms. NORTON and the Mayor both began to realize that, if they did not have a full-time and confirmed replacement by June 1, they would be without the authority to write checks; they would be without a requirement that makes the city physically work. This has been a flaw for a very long time. No city, no State, no government should have a single individual critical to the disbursement and consideration of their just debts; but that is, in fact, the way the law was written.

This bill very narrowly but essentially—and, if I may say, it's long overdue—recognizes that there has to be a succession plan, a capability to fill vacancies. H.R. 1246 parallels the Federal

Vacancies Reform Act and simply reaffirms a logical sequence of who may be considered to fill this vacancy for whatever period of time would be reasonable. Under our legislation, we recognize that we also mirror the Federal statute for what is, in fact, a temporary filling.

I want to just close by thanking Delegate HOLMES NORTON. She brought this to us, realizing how critical it could be, and was the first to realize that, if Dr. Gandhi had simply had a car accident and had become infirmed, the same exact situation could have happened and could have been a crisis during an August recess or some other period of time in which Congress would have found itself unable to resolve it in a timely fashion. So I want to thank her for recognizing the potential before all others, and perhaps that's the best justification for having a Delegate represent the District of Columbia as she has so well.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I begin by thanking the chairman, Chairman ISSA and, of course, Ranking Member CUMMINGS for so quickly understanding the importance of bringing this bill to the floor and for marking it up expeditiously. We brought it to the chairman and the ranking member after they had completed the list for the markup, and they immediately recognized how important this bill was.

May I also take this moment to thank Chairman ISSA for his continued partnership on legislation to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the District of Columbia, including budget autonomy, which got a boost this week when President Obama included a legislative provision—that's the first time any President has ever included legislative language—to grant D.C. budget autonomy in his budget.

This legislation is a whole lot more straightforward but is highly technical and could have been overlooked. The District of Columbia Chief Financial Officer Vacancy Act is, however, an important example of Chairman ISSA's commitment to assist the District of Columbia in improving and safeguarding its vital operations.

The bill, based on the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998, is intended to clarify the authority of the Mayor of the District of Columbia to fill a vacancy in the Office of the Chief Financial Officer on an interim basis. Under the bill, if there is a vacancy in the Office of the CFO because the CFO has died or resigned or has otherwise become unable to perform the functions and duties of the office, under this bill, patterned after Federal legislation, the D.C. treasurer becomes the acting CFO unless the Mayor appoints a deputy CFO to serve as the acting CFO. In either case, there may not be an acting CFO for more than 210 days.

The CFO, an independent official created by Congress, oversees all of the financial operations of the District of

Columbia. The city may not obligate or expend funds without the CFO's approval. Congress, apparently unintentionally, created uncertainty regarding the Mayor's authority to appoint an interim CFO in the fiscal 2001 District of Columbia Appropriations Act, which added a 30-day congressional review and comment period before the appointment of a CFO takes effect.

Now, when we passed the original bill, there was not that comment period, and here is where we got the technical flaw and Congress retained this congressional review and comment period in its rewrite of the CFO statute in the 2005 District of Columbia Omnibus Authorization Act. In the event of a vacancy, this review and comment period could leave the District without a CFO for at least 30 days.

While it could be argued that the Mayor has the general authority to execute the laws and to administer the affairs of the District of Columbia, which may give the Mayor implicit authority to fill a vacancy in the Office of the CFO on an interim basis, this office, after all, was created by the Congress. It would not be prudent to leave doubt about the Mayor's authority as to the only officer who can authorize spending for the District of Columbia. The bill removes any possible doubt.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ISSA. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would like to join with my colleague, Ms. NORTON, in her comments just a moment ago.

□ 1720

The President recognizes that now is the time to work on a bipartisan basis on budget autonomy for the District, recognizing that every year contracts have to be let for teachers who will go to work in late August and early September, but in fact they often do not know what their budget is going to be on October 1. So this is another area where I think Ms. NORTON and I find ourselves prepared to bring legislation in a timely fashion that deals with the need to make sure that the taxes raised within the District of Columbia by the people of the District of Columbia can in fact be put toward those essential, important services that are paid for by the taxes of the people of the District.

So although that isn't directly related to today's legislation, I think it's critical that we as the ultimate stewards of the Federal city recognize that we cannot run the Federal city, we cannot budget the Federal city, we cannot in fact do what mayors and city councils do as well as they do. So although I share with my colleagues that it is a responsibility the Constitution gives us, I join with my colleague, Ms. NORTON, in saying that we will live up to the President's request in the budget; we will offer legislation from our committee in the next month or so, so that long before the passage of appropriations we once again have a piece of

legislation before this committee that deals with a long overdue reform to the Home Rule Act, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. NORTON. May I thank the chairman for his remarks concerning budget autonomy. Many in the District see budget autonomy as simply a right because it is a local budget; and, of course, the Congress had nothing to do with raising the funds in that budget.

The chairman had a hearing where he listened to the ramifications and effects of bringing a local budget to a body that, even in the best of times, is surrounded by great uncertainty; and he heard the experience of the penalties that the District incurs in its bond rating which otherwise would be perhaps the best in the country because the District has such a large reserve, unusual in these times. And he heard about our budget year, which is timed to begin with the congressional budget year; whereas, every other jurisdiction in the United States begins its fiscal year in July timed to their own children and the opening of school. And he heard about the difficulties of running a large city government and of the shutdown preparations we've had to make because our budget is tied to the federal budget.

The District of Columbia did not lobby the chairman. He is an astute observer, not only of the District of Columbia, but of how money is managed, and he himself came forward with the notion that the local budget ought to be with local residents. It seems to me to be a particularly thoughtful proposal when you consider that Congress, in bills and various provisions that have been offered, still would have the final authority over the budget. Here we have a situation where Congress would lose nothing, but the District would gain what we would in the District would call almost everything.

With that, I'm pleased to yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS), the ranking member who has been so helpful to me on this and other matters.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I want to first of all say to Ms. NORTON, I want to thank you for your vigilance and thank you for staying on the case. No matter how history will be written about the District of Columbia, it must be said that you have, over and over again, stood up for the District, trying to make sure that it has the autonomy that it deserves, which is simply right, and we thank you very much for those efforts.

As ranking member of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, I rise in strong support of this important legislation. The District of Columbia Chief Financial Officer Vacancy Act would give the D.C. Mayor the express authority to appoint an acting chief financial officer in the event of a vacancy in the Office of the Chief Financial Officer, an independent office created by Congress and respon-

sible for the financial operations of the District.

While the Mayor, as the official responsible for executing the laws of the District, may have implied authority under current law to appoint an acting chief financial officer, this bill erases any doubt about the Mayor's authority to appoint an acting CFO.

That is so very important. The District's strong credit rating is attributable in no small part to the Office of the Chief Financial Officer, and it is important that there be no confusion about the office's ability to expend funds.

Finally let me say this. I agree with the gentlelady, with her comments, with regard to her comments with regard to the chairman of the committee. He has shown strong support for this autonomy that she is talking about, the autonomy that the residents of the District of Columbia richly deserve; and hopefully we will be able to move this ball forward so that when we look at the end of our tenure, if not before, we will be able to say that we were able to accomplish it and get it done.

So I applaud the chairman for his foresight. I definitely support him in his efforts with regard to that issue. And to this issue, by the way, because this issue here that we are dealing with today, clearly, we had a situation where there was a hole that needed to be closed so that there would be clarity. And through your foresight, Ms. NORTON, and certainly the foresight of the D.C. Government, we now are able to close that so there is no ambiguity whatsoever.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this bill, and thank the gentlelady for yielding to me.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, but I do want to thank the ranking member for his very vigorous and important remarks on this bill, and for his great assistance to me on this bill and on budget autonomy and many other issues.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members to join with me in support of H.R. 1246. This bill under consideration is critical and timely.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1246.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CONTRACTING AND TAX ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 2013

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 882) to prohibit the awarding of a contract or grant in excess of the sim-

plified acquisition threshold unless the prospective contractor or grantee certifies in writing to the agency awarding the contract or grant that the contractor or grantee has no seriously delinquent tax debts, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 882

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Contracting and Tax Accountability Act of 2013".

SEC. 2. GOVERNMENTAL POLICY.

It is the policy of the United States Government that no Government contracts or grants should be awarded to individuals or companies with seriously delinquent Federal tax debts.

SEC. 3. DISCLOSURE AND EVALUATION OF CONTRACT OFFERS FROM DELINQUENT FEDERAL DEBTORS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The head of any executive agency that issues an invitation for bids or a request for proposals for a contract in an amount greater than the simplified acquisition threshold shall require each person that submits a bid or proposal to submit with the bid or proposal a form—

(1) certifying that the person does not have a seriously delinquent tax debt; and

(2) authorizing the Secretary of the Treasury to disclose to the head of the agency information limited to describing whether the person has a seriously delinquent tax debt.

(b) IMPACT ON RESPONSIBILITY DETERMINATION.—The head of any executive agency, in evaluating any offer received in response to a solicitation issued by the agency for bids or proposals for a contract, shall consider a certification that the offeror has a seriously delinquent tax debt to be definitive proof that the offeror is not a responsible source as defined in section 113 of title 41, United States Code.

(c) DEBARMENT.—

(1) REQUIREMENT.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the head of an executive agency shall initiate a suspension or debarment proceeding against a person after receiving an offer for a contract from such person if—

(A) such offer contains a certification (as required under subsection (a)(1)) that such person has a seriously delinquent tax debt; or

(B) the head of the agency receives information from the Secretary of the Treasury (as authorized under subsection (a)(2)) demonstrating that such a certification submitted by such person is false.

(2) WAIVER.—The head of an executive agency may waive paragraph (1) with respect to a person based upon a written finding of urgent and compelling circumstances significantly affecting the interests of the United States. If the head of an executive agency waives paragraph (1) for a person, the head of the agency shall submit to Congress, within 30 days after the waiver is made, a report containing the rationale for the waiver and relevant information supporting the waiver decision.

(d) RELEASE OF INFORMATION.—The Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, shall make available to all executive agencies a standard form for the authorization described in subsection (a).

(e) REVISION OF REGULATIONS.—Not later than 270 days after the date of enactment of this subsection, the Federal Acquisition Regulation shall be revised to incorporate the requirements of this section.

SEC. 4. DISCLOSURE AND EVALUATION OF GRANT APPLICATIONS FROM DELINQUENT FEDERAL DEBTORS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The head of any executive agency that offers a grant in excess of an amount equal to the simplified acquisition threshold shall require each person applying for a grant to submit with the grant application a form—

(1) certifying that the person does not have a seriously delinquent tax debt; and

(2) authorizing the Secretary of the Treasury to disclose to the head of the executive agency information limited to describing whether the person has a seriously delinquent tax debt.

(b) IMPACT ON DETERMINATION OF FINANCIAL STABILITY.—The head of any executive agency, in evaluating any application for a grant offered by the agency, shall consider a certification that the grant applicant has a seriously delinquent tax debt to be definitive proof that the applicant is high-risk and, if the applicant is awarded the grant, shall take appropriate measures under guidelines issued by the Office of Management and Budget for enhanced oversight of high-risk grantees.

(c) DEBARMENT.—

(1) REQUIREMENT.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the head of an executive agency shall initiate a suspension or debarment proceeding against a person after receiving a grant application from such person if—

(A) such application contains a certification (as required under subsection (a)(1)) that such person has a seriously delinquent tax debt; or

(B) the head of the agency receives information from the Secretary of the Treasury (as authorized under subsection (a)(2)) demonstrating that such a certification submitted by such person is false.

(2) WAIVER.—The head of an executive agency may waive paragraph (1) with respect to a person based upon a written finding of urgent and compelling circumstances significantly affecting the interests of the United States. If the head of an executive agency waives paragraph (1) for a person, the head of the agency shall submit to Congress, within 30 days after the waiver is made, a report containing the rationale for the waiver and relevant information supporting the waiver decision.

(d) RELEASE OF INFORMATION.—The Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, shall make available to all executive agencies a standard form for the authorization described in subsection (a).

(e) REVISION OF REGULATIONS.—Not later than 270 days after the date of the enactment of this section, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall revise such regulations as necessary to incorporate the requirements of this section.

SEC. 5. DEFINITIONS AND SPECIAL RULES.

For purposes of this Act:

(1) PERSON.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term “person” includes—

- (i) an individual;
- (ii) a partnership; and
- (iii) a corporation.

(B) EXCLUSION.—The term “person” does not include an individual seeking assistance through a grant entitlement program.

(C) TREATMENT OF CERTAIN PARTNERSHIPS.—A partnership shall be treated as a person with a seriously delinquent tax debt if such partnership has a partner who—

- (i) holds an ownership interest of 50 percent or more in that partnership; and
- (ii) has a seriously delinquent tax debt.

(D) TREATMENT OF CERTAIN CORPORATIONS.—A corporation shall be treated as a person with a seriously delinquent tax debt

if such corporation has an officer or a shareholder who—

(i) holds 50 percent or more, or a controlling interest that is less than 50 percent, of the outstanding shares of corporate stock in that corporation; and

(ii) has a seriously delinquent tax debt.

(2) EXECUTIVE AGENCY.—The term “executive agency” has the meaning given such term in section 133 of title 41, United States Code.

(3) SERIOUSLY DELINQUENT TAX DEBT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term “seriously delinquent tax debt” means an outstanding Federal debt under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 for which a notice of lien has been filed in public records pursuant to section 6323 of such Code.

(B) EXCEPTIONS.—Such term does not include—

(i) a debt that is being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreement under section 6159 or section 7122 of such Code; and

(ii) a debt with respect to which a collection due process hearing under section 6330 of such Code, or relief under subsection (a), (b), or (f) of section 6015 of such Code, is requested or pending.

SEC. 6. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Act shall apply with respect to contracts and grants awarded on or after the date occurring 270 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

□ 1730

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

H.R. 882, the Contracting and Tax Accountability Act of 2013, is, in fact, a broadly bipartisan bill introduced by Mr. CHAFFETZ of Utah and Ms. SPEIER of California. They recognize that, in fact, contractors and, in a companion bill, individual Federal employees have a high standard, a high responsibility, and one of the least of those responsibilities is to pay their taxes in a timely fashion.

Sadly, we discover that, on occasions, we find ourselves with contractors who have not met that responsibility. Most often, those contractors, by not meeting that responsibility, may have, in fact, not deposited the withholding of the very workers who are working on our behalf.

This kind of irresponsible behavior, although not always found, is found often enough that GSA contractors are estimated to owe over \$3 billion in taxes that are in arrears, and nearly \$1.4 billion seriously in arrears.

The bill makes tax compliance both a prerequisite for receiving a contract or

being an agent and, in fact, recognizes that those who do not make good on their taxes may, in fact, be seen as eligible for potential suspension or debarment.

Federal contractors, for the most part, do comply and they do comply very well. But I believe that what Ms. SPEIER and Chairman CHAFFETZ have done is recognize that we must have zero tolerance for people who, even after being recognized, and who are seriously behind and delinquent, continue to resist paying their just taxes.

Again, often these taxes have nothing to do with a debate about income tax but, rather, withholding that simply wasn't done. These kinds of contractors are, by definition, the ones also likely to not live up to the high standard that the taxpayers expect by our contractors.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I want to, first of all, thank Congressman CHAFFETZ and Congresswoman SPEIER for introducing this very, very important piece of legislation. And I rise in strong support of H.R. 882, the Contracting and Tax Accountability Act.

This bill is very similar to legislation passed by the House in the 110th Congress, and I supported it then, and I surely support it now. The bill enjoys bipartisan support. It is noncontroversial. Last month it was considered by the Oversight Committee and passed unanimously.

GAO has reported that government contractors owed more than \$5 billion in unpaid Federal taxes in 2004 and 2005. Unpaid tax, taxes owed by contractors, included payroll taxes as well as corporate income taxes.

GAO has also found that some contractors with unpaid tax debts are repeat offenders that have failed to pay their taxes over many years, including, in one case, for almost 20 years.

H.R. 882 would allow the Federal Government to ensure that contractors seeking to do business with the Federal Government have paid their taxes before they can receive a Federal contract.

The Federal Acquisition Regulation was revised in 2008 to require contractors to certify that they do not owe a delinquent tax debt to the Federal Government. The bill builds on that requirement by providing Federal agencies the means to verify contractors' claims.

The legislation will also ensure that responsible contractors no longer have to compete with tax delinquents.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this important piece of legislation in order to preserve the fairness in the contracting process.

I also take a moment to salute our chairman, Mr. ISSA, for making sure that this bill reached the floor. And so with that, we will now be able to address some of these deadbeat contractors.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, it's now my honor to yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Utah (Mr. CHAFFETZ), the author of this bill, a champion for accountability of the Federal workforce and Federal contractors.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman ISSA for his unyielding support in pursuit of good government. And I thank him for his support of this piece of legislation moved forward.

I also thank Ranking Member CUMMINGS, in working with him and his staff, and certainly with Representative SPEIER, who also shares his passion of making sure that contractors are held responsible for their actions.

Mr. Speaker, today, tens of millions of individuals and corporations all across America will file their Federal tax returns and pay back any money they owe the Federal Government.

However, unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, there will be some who fail to meet this obligation and simply refuse to pay the taxes they owe.

This legislation, H.R. 882, the Contracting and Tax Accountability Act, has a very simple purpose: to prohibit companies with serious delinquent Federal tax debts from doing business with the Federal Government and receiving new Federal contracts. Since Federal contractors draw compensation and funding from taxpayer dollars, we must ensure that they are complying with existing laws and paying their own taxes.

Mr. Speaker, just last month this legislation passed through the Oversight and Government Reform Committee by voice vote, and it is identical to legislation that also unanimously passed the committee last Congress.

Going back a little further, Mr. Speaker, in both the 110th and the 111th Congress, former Congressman Brad Ellsworth of Indiana introduced very similar versions of this bill. And in the 110th Congress, the legislation passed the House again by voice vote.

It begs the question what's happening over there in the United States Senate, but we will continue to pursue this to make sure this legislation passes.

Also back in the 110th Congress, then-Senator Barack Obama sponsored the Senate companion, Contractor and Tax Accountability Act, to Congressman Ellsworth's legislation but, unfortunately, the legislation did not progress in either Chamber then.

As President, Mr. Obama has continued to fight for the contractors to be held accountable. I concur with the President on this issue. This is bipartisan.

We're going to lead and spearhead this effort here in the House of Representatives and make sure that it becomes law, but the United States Senate is going to actually have to step up and do something at some point in life, Mr. Speaker.

This is a good piece of legislation. H.R. 882 establishes the process through which persons with serious delinquent Federal tax debts may be prohibited from receiving Federal contracts and grants. The legislation is designed to mandate that tax compliance be a prerequisite for receiving a Federal contract or a grant.

As the chairman knows, the Federal Acquisition Regulation, known as the FAR, was revised in 2008 to require contractors to certify they do not have delinquent tax debt to the Federal Government. Under the FAR revision, if a contractor is delinquent, then the standard Government-wide suspension and debarment process occurs in order to hold the contractor accountable.

H.R. 882 would, in essence, codify that regulation and provide a means to verify the contractor's certification. The legislation also provides broad exceptions for debts being paid in a timely manner, and debts to which a due process hearing has been requested or is pending.

Like the Federal Employee Tax Accountability Act, to be considered next, this legislation is meant to affect those thumbing their nose at Uncle Sam and the United States of America.

The Government Accountability Office, the GAO, has reported that government contractors owe over \$5 billion in unpaid Federal taxes. Many of the contractors have repeatedly failed to fulfill their tax obligations and have delinquencies that have extended over multiple tax periods.

GAO even identified instances in which companies that are delinquent in their taxes have won contracts by submitting lower offers than companies that comply with their tax obligations, giving them an undue advantage.

Those who consciously ignore the channels in place to fulfill their tax obligations must be held accountable, and they must play on the same even playing field. This legislation will do just that.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this commonsense, bipartisan piece of legislation. I again thank Chairman ISSA for his support, as well as Ranking Member CUMMINGS.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SPEIER), the cosponsor of this legislation.

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the ranking member for allotting me some time to speak on this bill, and to our chairman, Mr. ISSA, for moving this bill forward, and to my colleague, Mr. CHAFFETZ from Utah, who is the author of this measure.

Imagine what our constituents are thinking right now. Imagine if they really knew that while they're scurrying around trying to get their tax returns filed on time and making sure they have adequate funds in their accounts to write out that check, that there are corporations in this country that continue to get contracts from the United States of America, even though they don't pay their taxes.

So this bill will ensure that taxpayer dollars due today only go to responsible contractors who do not have significant debts to the Federal Government. This bill will make it clear to all contracting officials: no more tax money for deadbeat contractors.

□ 1740

As it stands, delinquent contractors are not only eligible for future contracts, but they actually get them. With one of the largest budgets in the Federal Government, the Defense Department already has a reputation for letting contractors fleece taxpayers. And to underscore this point, when the Defense Department needed a new PR contractor, they settled on a company that still owed \$4 million in taxes. How can we allow that to happen?

Another company that owed the Federal Government a million dollars in taxes was paid an additional million dollars as a contractor from the Department of Defense. Instead of using the money to pay back the government, what did he do with the money? He bought a boat, some cars, and a home overseas.

Even the IRS, the agency responsible for collecting our taxes, has fallen down on the job of making sure that our taxpayer dollars only go to contractors who have paid them. The Inspector General found the IRS gave 11 companies \$356 million in contracts despite owing millions of dollars themselves.

So the question is, Why would we reward scofflaws?

Let's get this done this year. And I would suggest to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle if in fact the Senate is the logjam, if that's what is going to prevent this from taking effect, let's co-write a letter to the President of the United States and ask him under his powers of executive order to take the steps necessary to put this in place so that we don't continue to have contractors who do not pay their taxes getting rewarded with contracts by the Federal Government.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, at this time I have no further requests for time, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has 14½ minutes remaining.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlelady from Washington, D.C. (Ms. NORTON).

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to thank Mr. CHAFFETZ and Mr. ISSA for this bill.

Initially, there was a bill involving only Federal employees. And we had a concern that often when bills come forward for Federal employees, they are not bills that recognize the substantial funds that contractors receive. And Chairman ISSA and Chairman CHAFFETZ looked closely at it and now have come forward with a contractor's bill as well.

I do want to say in light of the fact that I'm going to oppose the next bill—

and I do believe there's a difference between employees and contractors, and I don't want to get into that right at this moment—I do want to say that for Federal employees undergoing a pay freeze and furloughs, there's one thing Uncle Sam can do that apparently hasn't been done with many contractors. He can garnish wages. And you can bet your bottom dollar if there's a Federal employee that owes taxes and you can prove that money is owed to the Federal Government, his pay will be garnished.

But as we heard the gentlelady from California say, these contractors continue to receive the largesse—I guess that's how they regard it—of the Federal Government. It certainly can be distinguished in that way. But I do believe that the chairman of the full committee and the subcommittee deserve credit for, in fact, moving at least where they saw that there should be some equity, that contractors would be treated similarly to Federal employees.

Mr. ISSA. I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Having no further requests for time, Mr. Speaker, I urge Members to vote in favor of this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I made a decision to bring these two bills separately, rather than combine them, for a reason. This is not controversial, but failed to get through the Senate. The other bill has some controversy. But I'd like to say that in fact I believe that both bills would tell the American people—both the one related to contractors and the next one we'll be considering related to Federal employees—that we hold ourselves to the standard that the American people, the American taxpayer, expects us to.

So although I know that Ms. NORTON does not support the next bill, but with the kind of vigor and optimism and positive discussion that we've heard on the previous two bills and on this, I would say that the important thing for all of us to understand is the money here is significant; but the principle of holding our contractors, and in the next bill ourselves, responsible to a high level of integrity and not having those continue without us taking note of it, I think offers the same statement to the American people at a time of sequestration, at a time in which we're questioning how much we can afford from our government.

For that reason, I want these bills to be considered separately. I intend to vote for both of them. I believe both of them have merit for the same reason; but I do thank my colleagues on the other side because this bill, I believe, is truly without controversy and would be without controversy. I ask all of those here to note that we, on a unanimous basis, support H.R. 882. I ask its support, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 882, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

FEDERAL EMPLOYEE TAX ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 2013

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 249) to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide that persons having seriously delinquent tax debts shall be ineligible for Federal employment.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 249

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Federal Employee Tax Accountability Act of 2013”.

SEC. 2. INELIGIBILITY OF PERSONS HAVING SERIOUSLY DELINQUENT TAX DEBTS FOR FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 73 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SUBCHAPTER VIII—INELIGIBILITY OF PERSONS HAVING SERIOUSLY DELINQUENT TAX DEBTS FOR FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT

“§ 7381. Definitions

“For purposes of this subchapter—

“(1) the term ‘seriously delinquent tax debt’ means an outstanding debt under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 for which a notice of lien has been filed in public records pursuant to section 6323 of such Code, except that such term does not include—

“(A) a debt that is being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreement under section 6159 or section 7122 of such Code;

“(B) a debt with respect to which a collection due process hearing under section 6330 of such Code, or relief under subsection (a), (b), or (f) of section 6015 of such Code, is requested or pending;

“(C) a debt with respect to which a levy has been issued under section 6331 of such Code (or, in the case of an applicant for employment, a debt with respect to which the applicant agrees to be subject to a levy issued under such section); and

“(D) a debt with respect to which relief under section 6343(a)(1)(D) of such Code is granted;

“(2) the term ‘employee’ means an employee in or under an agency, including an individual described in sections 2104(b) and 2105(e); and

“(3) the term ‘agency’ means—

“(A) an Executive agency;

“(B) the United States Postal Service;

“(C) the Postal Regulatory Commission; and

“(D) an employing authority in the legislative branch.

“§ 7382. Ineligibility for employment

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsection (c), any person who has a seriously delinquent tax debt shall be ineligible to be appointed or to continue serving as an employee.

“(b) DISCLOSURE REQUIREMENT.—The head of each agency shall take appropriate measures to ensure that each person applying for employment with such agency shall be required to submit (as part of the application for employment) certification that such person does not have any seriously delinquent tax debt.

“(c) REGULATIONS.—The Office of Personnel Management, in consultation with the Internal Revenue Service, shall, for purposes of carrying out this section with respect to the executive branch, promulgate any regulations which the Office considers necessary, except that such regulations shall provide for the following:

“(1) All due process rights, afforded by chapter 75 and any other provision of law, shall apply with respect to a determination under this section that an applicant is ineligible to be appointed or that an employee is ineligible to continue serving.

“(2) Before any such determination is given effect with respect to an individual, the individual shall be afforded 180 days to demonstrate that such individual's debt is one described in subparagraph (A), (B), (C), or (D) of section 7381(a)(1).

“(3) An employee may continue to serve, in a situation involving financial hardship, if the continued service of such employee is in the best interests of the United States, as determined on a case-by-case basis.

“(d) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—The Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall report annually to Congress on the number of exemptions made pursuant to subsection (c)(3).

“§ 7383. Review of public records

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Each agency shall provide for such reviews of public records as the head of such agency considers appropriate to determine if a notice of lien (as described in section 7381(1)) has been filed with respect to an employee of or an applicant for employment with such agency.

“(b) ADDITIONAL REQUESTS.—If a notice of lien is discovered under subsection (a) with respect to an employee or applicant for employment, the agency may—

“(1) request that the employee or applicant execute and submit a form authorizing the Secretary of the Treasury to disclose to the head of the agency information limited to describing whether the employee or applicant has a seriously delinquent tax debt; and

“(2) contact the Secretary of the Treasury to request tax information limited to describing whether the employee or applicant has a seriously delinquent tax debt.

“(c) AUTHORIZATION FORM.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall make available to all agencies a standard form for the authorization described in subsection (b)(1).

“(d) NEGATIVE CONSIDERATION.—The head of an agency, in considering an individual's application for employment or in making an employee appraisal or evaluation, shall give negative consideration to a refusal or failure to comply with a request under subsection (b)(1).

“§ 7384. Confidentiality

“Neither the head nor any other employee of an agency may—

“(1) use any information furnished under the provisions of this subchapter for any purpose other than the administration of this subchapter;

“(2) make any publication whereby the information furnished by or with respect to

any particular individual under this subchapter can be identified; or

“(3) permit anyone who is not an employee of such agency to examine or otherwise have access to any such information.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 73 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SUBCHAPTER VIII—INELIGIBILITY OF PERSONS HAVING SERIOUSLY DELINQUENT TAX DEBTS FOR FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT

“7381. Definitions.

“7382. Ineligibility for employment.

“7383. Review of public records.

“7384. Confidentiality.”.

SEC. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Act and the amendments made by this Act shall take effect 9 months after the date of enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would like to commend Mr. CHAFFETZ. Like the last piece of legislation, Mr. CHAFFETZ reintroduces a bill that passed overwhelmingly in the last Congress but was not taken up by the Senate. As Mr. CHAFFETZ said, it is in fact time for the Senate to at least give us an up-or-down vote on this legislation. By bringing it early in the Congress and, I believe, all these bills on a bipartisan basis, we make it clear that we want to hold ourselves to the standard that the taxpayers believe we should.

All Federal employees are currently held for paying their taxes by the code of ethics of the executive branch. So how can someone who, by the code of ethics, in fact not have satisfied in good faith their obligations as citizens, including all financial obligations, especially those to the Federal, State, and local taxes that are imposed by law, how can somebody who in fact hasn't done it and has reached a point of garnishment, reached a point at which they are unwilling to pay their just taxes, have no appeals or any pending, how can they in fact continue to expect to be Federal employees? The truth is these employees have given up any question about their ethics by avoiding it.

Before going further, I would like to have the Speaker take note that in fact for us, as Federal employees, our withholding is already taken out of our taxes. So to become seriously in ar-

rears in our taxes, for the most part, has to do with activities outside our role. We're well insured for health care. Our taxes have already been withheld. So although there are occasions in which a taxpayer may find themselves seriously in arrears for some reason otherwise, this bill intends and has carefully crafted every possible exception so they could continue to work if, in fact, reasonable measures have been taken by the employee. In fact, if an employee simply agrees to be garnished for past taxes, pursuant to the law, they in fact can continue to work.

So I'd like to preface by saying this bill has passed before and has been well thought out. We in fact sent a letter to IRS asking them for a timely response. And to my dismay, they were not interested enough to respond to us by the deadline. Of course, the deadline for responding really was in the last Congress.

I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1750

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

As one who represents many Federal employees, with the Social Security Administration smack dab in the middle of my district, with many of my constituents getting up at 4 o'clock in the morning, catching the train over here from Howard County and Baltimore County to work for the Federal Government, a group of people, many of whom are being subjected now to furloughs, have been subjected to pay freezes, in some instances have been placed in a position where they have to pay more toward their pensions and get less, a group of people who in many instances I run into them at the gas station, at the Pancake House, or wherever I may see them, who are very much concerned about a word that has become a significant word in this House, “uncertainty.” I strongly oppose H.R. 249, a measure that would require the Federal Government to fire—to fire—Federal employees who have an outstanding tax debt. The legislation is unwarranted, unnecessary and, in fact, counterproductive.

I believe that Federal employees, like all Americans, should pay their taxes, and I don't think that there's one single Member of this Congress that feels otherwise. We all believe that Federal employees and all folks who owe taxes ought to pay them. Federal workers hold the public trust and should be held to a high standard of conduct. The fact is that Federal employees have met and exceeded that standard.

The legislation is unwarranted because the tax delinquency rate for Federal employees is less than half that of the general public. In 2011, the tax delinquency rate for the general public was 8.2 percent. In the same year, the tax delinquency rate for Federal workers was only 3.62 percent. Now, let me make it clear: I would suggest that it would be best—and wonderful—if that

percentage was zero, but it's not. But again, the general delinquency rate, 8.2 percent; Federal workers, 3.62 percent.

The legislation is unnecessary because the IRS and other executive agencies already have procedures in place to recover back taxes from Federal employees. Through the Federal Payment and Levy Program, the IRS can impose a continuous levy on Federal salaries and annuities up to 15 percent until the debt is paid. Agencies also have the authority to take disciplinary action against employees for delinquent tax debts, which may include removal, if necessary.

The legislation is counterproductive because it would make it more difficult to collect unpaid taxes from Federal employees by requiring their termination and eliminating the ability to impose levies on their salaries.

On another note, I just left, about 3 hours ago, a job fair that I sponsored in my district where 9,000 unemployed people showed up. In talking to some of the various agencies, they said, Congressman CUMMINGS, we're glad that the State of Maryland is now dealing with child support issues a little bit differently because we used to take everybody's license. We would make it almost impossible for them to make money so that they could pay the child support. They said now we're beginning to turn some of those laws around because, again, we want to be effective and efficient in collecting the money. Here, if a person has no job, how are they going to pay their taxes?

I am also concerned that this legislation is being rushed to the floor today to apparently make a political point. During committee debate over the legislation, questions were raised. To his credit, the chairman agreed that we would try to get some responses from the IRS about the rules and procedures regarding debt collection, options for resolving delinquencies, payment options, tax delinquencies of IRS employees, and other issues. The chairman promised to obtain the answers to these questions from the IRS and to work with Democrats before the bill was brought to the floor.

Now, I have absolutely no doubt that the IRS failed to do what they were supposed to do; they did not give us the information. But there was a reason that we wanted that information. We wanted the information so that we could base our decisions on sound facts. If we are placing people in a position where they will lose their way of feeding their family and having a roof over their head and taking care of their kids, it would be nice to have information.

I tell my staff all the time: Give me the information so that I can make a decent decision. We don't have that information, and that is unfortunate. Hopefully, at some point, we will get it from the IRS. Again, Mr. Speaker, I don't blame the chairman. He did his part. He submitted his letter, I know he did, but we still have not heard from

the IRS. So on April 4, 2013, I joined with Chairman ISSA in sending that letter to the IRS, requesting specific information that the committee members agreed was necessary to fairly and fully evaluate the need for this legislation.

Again, without this information, it is unclear whether various scenarios under which taxpayer disputes of tax debt would be exempted under the bill. For example, it is unclear whether an appeal from a collection due process hearing, litigation proceedings in U.S. Tax Court, or hearings under the IRS' Collection Appeals Program would trigger an exemption.

Contrary to the chairman's assurances, the Republican leadership has insisted on bringing this bill to the floor without the benefit of this information and without resolving the many concerns raised during the committee debate. For these reasons, I urge my colleagues to join me in voting against this bill.

Again, we need information, but more importantly, there is something that the chairman said that I think we need to be clear on. I want to see, again, a situation where everybody pays every dime that they are supposed to pay, but I don't think that people get fired if they're not Federal employees when they have a tax delinquency. So when we're talking about fairness, again, we're talking about the Federal employee, and then we're talking about everybody else.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman is right. And I would take note that this afternoon the IRS did offer to speak to us over the phone but had no answers in writing, which continues to befuddle me a little bit that we can't get answers. I will continue to work with the ranking member to get those answers.

At this time, I yield 5 minutes to the author of the bill, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. CHAFFETZ).

Mr. CHAFFETZ. I thank Chairman ISSA, Speaker BOEHNER, and Leader CANTOR for their support in allowing us to bring this piece of legislation, a piece of legislation that has come before this body before. This is not a new topic. This is not something that just sprung up with us in the last 10 days here.

Mr. Speaker, on tax day, 2013, I want to impress upon my colleagues that Federal employees who consciously ignore the channels and processes in place to fulfill their tax obligations must be held accountable. The Federal Employee Tax Accountability Act addresses noncompliance with our tax laws by prohibiting individuals with serious delinquent tax debt from Federal civilian employment.

Most taxpayers file accurate tax returns and pay them on time. Most Federal workers do that—the overwhelming majority of them do it. In fact, statistically, more than 96 per-

cent of our Federal employees do the right thing and they do it on time. But, unfortunately, there are a few bad apples out there. There are a few people out there that, despite all the processes, all the appeals, all the things out there, Mr. Speaker, they still choose to thumb their nose at the rest of us. Unfortunately, there are 107,000 Federal workers who don't pay their taxes. It accounts for about \$1 billion in uncollected taxes.

In 2011—the most recent year for which the IRS data is available—they tell us that 107,658 civilian Federal employees owed more than \$1 billion. Now, the statistics say they have a greater compliance than the rest of the public. But let's remember, when you're unemployed, you're probably going to have a hard time complying. Employment for those that are Federal workers is 100 percent. They have a job. They have a responsibility to pay their taxes.

As the chairman indicated, the intent of the bill is simple: if you're a Federal employee or applicant, you should be making a good faith effort to pay your taxes or to dispute them, as the taxpayers have a right to do.

Under H.R. 249, individuals having seriously delinquent tax debts are ineligible for Federal civilian employment in the executive and legislative branch, including congressional staff. "Seriously tax delinquent" is defined as an outstanding Federal tax debt for which a notice of lien has been publicly filed.

□ 1800

And there are exemptions. If you're being paid in accordance with an installment agreement, perhaps you're having your wages garnished, you have an offer of compromise, or wage garnishment, you're exempted; it's not going to affect you.

The IRS has already told us on the record when they testified in a hearing that the overwhelming majority of the 107,000 people fall within that category. They testified to the body in the last Congress that roughly 12 percent of the 100,000 people would fall into this category that we're here talking about today. We've had a hearing about this. We did ask the IRS about this.

I also want to note, Mr. Speaker, on page 4 of the legislation at (c)(3):

An employee may continue to serve, in a situation involving financial hardship, if the continued service of such employee is in the best interests of the United States, as determined on a case-by-case basis.

There's an opportunity to have the person who's in charge to make a determination: Do you know what? I have looked at this, and I grant this person an exemption.

But, as I did when I spoke to a group of HR professionals who work within the Federal Government, I told them about this and said, You need some tools to take care of the bad apples. I could see every one of their heads shaking, yes, please, give us this tool.

The bill requires individuals applying for Federal jobs to certify they are not

seriously tax delinquent. Agencies will also conduct periodic reviews of public records for tax liens. Individuals with serious delinquent tax debt may avail themselves to existing due process rights, including going before the Merit Systems Protection Board.

In fact, in the last Congress, Mr. Speaker, Mr. LYNCH, who's as passionate on this issue as you can possibly find, offered some amendments. And let me read from the record when we accepted the amendment offered by Mr. LYNCH of Massachusetts:

Mr. LYNCH. With that refinement here, a friendly amendment, I certainly would vote for the bill if the amendment were included.

The amendment was included. We did this in a bipartisan way. That's why it sailed through the House of Representatives last time and why it should sail through again.

In addition, individuals have 6 months to demonstrate that their tax debt is not seriously delinquent—something that Mr. LYNCH asked for, something we agreed with, something that we move forward with.

For many of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, this legislation should sound familiar because we did pass it.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman an additional minute.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Actually, at this time, what I would like to do is yield back and respond based on the other comments.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished lady from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON).

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I just want to say to my good friends, the chairman of the full committee and of the subcommittee, that we were doing so well in the last few bills showing how bipartisan our committees could be. And I mean that sincerely, because the committee has been working in a very bipartisan way, particularly this year.

As I indicated in my prior remarks, there is not perfect symmetry between employees and contractors. Here is one of the examples where we do not have that symmetry.

Mr. Speaker, I am a firm believer in "lead by example." I think that applies to Members of Congress, and I believe the Federal employees believe that applies to them. Why else would they have a delinquency rate less than half the tax delinquency rate of other Americans? They know they are a unique workforce.

Here is a workforce that has already stepped up front beyond the American people. They are the ones who were the first to sacrifice for the deficit, and they keep sacrificing, now in the 3rd year of a freeze and a sequester on top of it.

Why would we pick them out for any other purpose except a symbolic purpose, which is what I see here? It's not

lost on any of us, Mr. Speaker, that today is April 15. I suppose this is a bill to make sure everybody understands that we understand it's April 15. I understand entirely the importance of symbolic moves. I put out a release myself today on taxation without representation.

But here we have the best workforce in the United States, the most specialized, and the workforce that has given more than any of us.

I have a serious legal problem with this bill. This bill defines a "seriously delinquent" Federal worker as one against whom there is "notice of a lien which has been publicly filed." Mr. Speaker, a notice of lien is a claim by the claimant, in this case, the United States. The answer may come, of course, as to any claim in our legal system from the defendant.

Here, on the basis of the claim alone, we are going so far as to allow even the employee to be fired, this at a time when Americans, including Federal employees, have had the worst hardships since the Great Depression, including homes under water and all the rest of it. It's just not necessary. If they have the best tax record in the United States, why then would they be picked out?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentlelady an additional 30 seconds.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to emphasize that the IRS already has special procedures to recover taxes from its own employees, and I commend the IRS for that, including, by the way, being able to garnish their wages up to 15 percent and even to take disciplinary actions. Why would we need anything further, particularly at this moment in time, against our Federal employees who have endured so much?

I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I join with the gentlelady from the District of Columbia in applauding what the IRS has done. The IRS effectively gave itself the rules that Mr. CHAFFETZ would like to have all Federal civilian workers living under.

The IRS has a delinquency rate now of 1 percent. So if you take a fraction of that 1 percent that could possibly be out of compliance for a short period of time, and that's what happens. You've lowered the overall rate from, for example, the Government Printing Office, 7.6 percent; the 316,000 people at the Department of Veterans Affairs, 13,000 of them, or 4.3 percent, are seriously in arrears.

Mr. Speaker, the gentlelady is absolutely right: the IRS did the right thing, and it worked. You've got a compliance rate down to 1 percent failure, or 99 percent positive compliance rate.

For all the Federal workers who are listening carefully because this could

affect them, they're looking to their left and their right endlessly wondering who these deadbeats are because, in all cases, it's below 10 percent, and at the IRS at 1 percent.

Mr. Speaker, the case for this legislation is made by the IRS's success, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER).

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I adopt the remarks that were made by Ms. NORTON. The delinquency rate of Federal employees is far below what it is for other employees on a general level throughout this country. I adopt the gentlelady's remarks that, yes, this is April 15, and my own staff has said, oh, I had to pay this, that, or the other.

The implication here is that we brought a bill dealing with Federal employees this day. Why? Because Federal employees are very easy to target. For people who don't like government: Well, the Federal employees, look at what they're doing. You're having to pay your taxes today before those deadbeat Federal employees. That's the message here.

Now, if this were a problem that you really wanted to deal with, it wouldn't have to be April 15. It could have been February 15 or it could be June 15. But, no, that's not the message here.

□ 1810

The message is that somehow Federal employees need to be targeted. I understand they work for us, and so they're easy to get at. And we are getting at them almost every week. We're furloughing them. We're suggesting they pay more, that they're not paying enough for retirement. We are suggesting that somehow they're less than stellar employees.

But before I conclude, let me take a second look at this.

We had a tragic event happen in Boston today, and the President was quick to call Governor Deval Patrick and say we're going to send some Federal employees from the FBI, the ATF, and other agencies to make sure that we look at this and protect America.

We extend our sympathies, of course, to all the victims and their families.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. CUMMINGS. I yield the gentleman an additional 1½ minutes.

Mr. HOYER. We express our sympathies to all of them, and we recognize that they have some employees in Boston and around this country at the municipal and State level, and, yes, at the Federal level, who are going to try to respond and make sure America is safe.

Let's send a message to those Federal employees, because they're our employees, that we respect them, their contribution. Let us not bring a bill to the floor—by the way, the gentleman is correct that it passed here not with my

vote last year, because I thought it was a message that was incorrect. I thought that there were processes in place today which allow us to act against those, yes, who are tax delinquents. But very frankly, this is not a discussion today about huge tax delinquents, huge tax frauds, people who are not paying taxes to this country in which they're being so successful.

So, Mr. Speaker, first of all, we send our regrets to those who have been the subject of a terrorist act, whether it was a domestic terrorist, a foreign terrorist, but a terrorist act this day.

Secondly, we say to those Federal employees who time after time, week after week, month after month are being disparaged by their board of directors, that we understand the quality of their service and contribution. And, yes, we understand there are some who don't do what they ought to do, and we demand that they do so, but this is not the way to do it.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to do too much responding to something that asks why something was brought on April 15, except to say that the minority was very happy to have us bring on April 15 something to hold contractors responsible on tax day for taxes, and we thought appropriate that both should be about this tax day in which 99 percent of Americans have paid all their taxes, whether they like to or not, and a small percentage have not.

With that, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Utah (Mr. CHAFFETZ).

Mr. CHAFFETZ. I thank the chairman.

Mr. Speaker, only in Washington, DC, can we say that this is not a serious issue. We're talking about 107,000 people and a billion dollars in uncollected taxes when the very Americans that are paying their paychecks are writing out their checks.

I would also look at the companion piece of legislation, which is \$5 billion, that deals with the contractors. What we're saying to the employees of the Federal Government—the men and women who are patriotic, who are doing their job; they're doing the right thing; they work hard; they love this country; they're the first ones to run and respond—we're going to take care of you; we've got your back. Because every once in a while there is a bad apple, there is somebody that works in that department, there is somebody that works in that agency who doesn't play by the rules like everybody else does. They give this country and they give their counterparts and their employees a bad name. We're going to stand up for them by giving that head of that department in the agency the opportunity to fire somebody if they don't comply.

Pay your Federal taxes, you're in good shape; don't pay your Federal taxes, don't put yourself in place, then we're going to give you an opportunity to be let go.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, may I ask how much time we have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Maryland has 6 minutes remaining.

Mr. CUMMINGS. I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. CARTWRIGHT).

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 249, the Federal Employee Tax Accountability Act of 2013.

On close examination, it is obvious that this bill is deceptive, unnecessary, and even counterproductive. It's a bill that puts additional requirements on Federal workers that the rest of the public does not face: that of losing their job because of a tax lien. On top of this, common sense will tell you it's a very difficult thing to collect taxes or any debt from somebody who doesn't have a job.

The IRS already has procedures in place to collect back taxes from Federal employees. The Federal Payment Levy Program allows the IRS to impose a continuous levy on Federal, and only Federal, employees up to 15 percent. This means Federal employees already are held to a higher standard and the IRS already has additional weapons in its arsenal, making the bill before us an over-the-top and punitive measure.

It's a solution without a real problem and a solution that will only make it harder to actually collect taxes. And I question whether this is a sincere effort to improve our Nation or just another in a long series of unfair attacks on Federal employees and the unions that represent them. These are people who haven't had a raise in 3 years. These are people for whom many are receiving furlough notices even as we speak. These are people that now we're attacking in a new and better way.

Mr. Speaker, I suggest at some point you wonder how we're supposed to attract talented and capable individuals to come to work for us when we treat them like this.

I urge my colleagues to join me in voting against the bill.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire as to how much time we have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from California has 8½ minutes remaining.

Mr. ISSA. At this time, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Utah (Mr. CHAFFETZ).

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to harken back to the comments of President Obama on January 20, 2010.

Make no mistake; the President was talking about delinquent contractors, not specifically about Federal workers. But I want you, as you listen to the President, in his own words, to wonder why should—these, too, are families. Contractors are families; they're Americans; they're people. Some of them are bad apples. Most of them do a good job.

But listen to the President as he's talking about contractors, and say:

Should the same be true for Federal workers?

Quote, from President Obama:

All across this country, there are people who meet their obligation each and every day. You do your jobs; you support your families; you pay taxes you owe because it's a fundamental responsibility of citizenship. And yet, somehow, it's become standard practice in Washington to give contracts to companies that don't pay their taxes.

Later on, the President said:

The status quo, then, is inefficiency, and it's wasteful by the larger and more fundamental point that it is wrong. It is simply wrong for companies to take taxpayer dollars and not be taxpayers themselves. So we need to insist on the same sense of responsibility in Washington that so many of you strive to uphold in your own lives, in your own families and your own businesses.

The same should be true for Federal workers. And when those Federal workers are giving out those Federal contracts by the hundreds of billions of dollars, let them be able to look people in the face and say, We hold ourselves to that same high standard. We're not having a separate standard for contractors and for you. Those of us that do work for the Federal Government are honest in our dealings. We pay our taxes. You know what? If we don't around here, they eventually fire us.

That seems to me to be common sense and the right approach.

□ 1820

Mr. CUMMINGS. I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. CÁRDENAS).

Mr. CÁRDENAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 249.

This bill would bar individuals who work for the Federal Government and who have a tax lien from being employed by the Federal Government. I agree with Congressman CHAFFETZ and the supporters of this bill that all citizens, including our Federal employees, should pay their taxes. However, this bill is far more focused on attacking Federal employees than on actually resolving problems. This bill, H.R. 249, is a political document, not a policy solution.

The IRS says that the tax delinquency rate for our Federal employees is half that of the average American taxpayer. This legislation is the wrong approach and is destined to be grossly ineffective because it makes collecting outstanding taxes difficult—by firing the very people we'd like to pay their taxes. As a former business owner myself, in putting people into homes, I used to find out time after time that the IRS would violate their agreement. It's the IRS that violates the agreement sometimes when somebody says, I'll pay it on a regular basis, and the IRS changes that agreement without notice. That will and does happen to employees all the time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. ISSA. I yield myself 1 minute.

The gentleman from California is new, and I'm sure he did not mean to disparage our intention.

Our intention was, in fact, to bring accountability and, in fact, a sense of pride to the Federal workforce, one in which 96-point-some percent do pay their taxes, and of the remaining ones who do not, the vast majority has made arrangements to deal with taxes in arrears.

But, Mr. Speaker, less than a year ago, I had my house robbed. I live in a low-crime neighborhood. Less than 2 percent of the homes get robbed in a given year, but the police still responded and still said, I'll do something about your home being burglarized.

All we're saying here is: let's stop talking about the 97 percent who do the right thing, and let's deal with those who do not in a way that encourages them, like the IRS has, to start doing the right thing and lower that failure rate to 1 percent or less.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CUMMINGS. I yield 1 minute to the gentlelady from California (Ms. SPEIER).

Ms. SPEIER. I thank the ranking member.

Let me just be very specific. Mr. CHAFFETZ, at one point, said we have a few bad apples, and the chairman suggested, Well, who are these deadbeats? Let's talk about who these deadbeats really are. \$3.5 billion—54 percent of that \$3.5 billion is attributed to military, active military, military Reserves, and retired military.

Now, I don't know about you, but I think maybe we should rethink this because the truth of the matter is 54 percent have either been in the military or active military. Furthermore, 46 percent of those "deadbeats" are civilian Federal employees retired and military Federal employees retired.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. ISSA. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the gentlelady is entitled to her opinion, but I don't believe her facts.

Our information shows that, in fact, first of all, this bill only pertains to civilian personnel. It does not affect uniformed military personnel. Uniformed military personnel can be court-martialed for not living up to their financial obligations. That is certainly more than we are considering here.

The fact is the numbers we presented, the numbers quoted here, represent civilian workers. Some of those civilian workers do also serve in the Reserves, and some of them are also retired individuals, but let's understand this is not about the men and women deployed in uniform. This is, in fact, about civilian workers who may have supplemental incomes from retirement, who may, in fact, also be Reserves. This is all about people who receive often more than \$100,000 a year and have not made arrangements to catch up on taxes that are seriously in arrears by up to \$10,000 or more.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have left?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Maryland has 2½ minutes remaining.

Mr. CUMMINGS. I yield that 2½ minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MORAN).

Mr. MORAN. I thank my very good friend from Baltimore.

The basic problem with this bill is that it claims to fix a problem that doesn't exist. The fact is that Federal employees have a delinquency rate that is less than half of what it is for the average American taxpayer. The fact is that there already exist programs to garnish wages and annuity income for delinquent filers. The fact is that agencies can already take disciplinary action against employees who have tax debt, including that of termination.

So why are we doing this—to punish people because they chose public service?

This bill would have virtually no effect on revenue because there are so few civil servants who are delinquent and, invariably, there is some understandable reason, just as there has been for a number of our colleagues over the years.

So it's not about bringing down the debt. This is about threatening Federal workers, singling them out by suggesting that there is some kind of endemic problem when there isn't. You've already docked the Federal workforce with up to 14 unpaid furlough days. You've cut more than \$100 billion from their pensions and pay. You've just sequestered \$600 million from the IRS.

Federal employees work for our constituents, and they work for us. Their jobs are to carry out the laws that we make. The majority of this House apparently ran for office on the claim that the Federal Government isn't working, and now that they've been elected they're trying to prove it—by threatening and accusing and, thus, demoralizing the dedicated public servants who have fought our wars, built our roads and bridges, enforced our laws, invented the technology that powers our economy, and researched the treatments that heal and save our loved ones. And all this Congress can do is to threaten them with bills like this.

This is not a fair bill, and thus I urge a “no” vote on it.

Mr. ISSA. I now yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Utah (Mr. CHAFFETZ).

Mr. CHAFFETZ. This bill doesn't threaten the Federal employees. It only threatens the Federal employees who don't pay their Federal taxes. You pay your taxes because you get your income from the taxpayers. It doesn't affect you.

What I hear continually, Mr. Speaker, is, Oh, no problem here. Don't worry about it.

It's \$1 billion in uncollected taxes. For far too long, this Congress has ignored this. They keep giving contrac-

tors contracts up to the tune of \$5 billion a year. I introduced that bill as well.

So to suggest, Mr. Speaker, that this bill is unfair, it's unwarranted, it's going to harm Federal employees—it's going to protect Federal employees, because the ones who are doing the right job, that are patriotic, are protected under this bill. Only those who thumb their noses and won't pay their taxes are the ones who should be scared of this bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Maryland is recognized for 15 seconds.

Mr. CUMMINGS. I yield the remaining time to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MORAN).

Mr. MORAN. The problem with this bill is that it singles out Federal employees by threatening and accusing them, suggesting that there is an endemic problem within the Federal Government, and there isn't.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. MORAN. I am more than happy to yield to the gentleman from Utah if I have the time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. ISSA. I yield 10 seconds to the gentleman from Utah (Mr. CHAFFETZ).

Mr. CHAFFETZ. There are 107,000 people who haven't paid about \$1 billion in taxes. To suggest there isn't a problem is, I think, factually without merit.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from California has 3¼ minutes remaining.

Mr. ISSA. I yield myself the remaining time.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to close on a little bit quieter note than the debate. The debate was, rightfully so, heated, and it was heated because, in fact, we are making an important symbolic statement in this legislation.

\$1 billion is a lot of money to the taxpayers listening, but the principle here is extremely important. It's a principle that shows that, when the IRS changed their rules, they didn't fire very many people. I'm sure, in fact, what they got was compliance, far greater compliance, but let's go through a few things because the gentlelady, my colleague and friend from California (Ms. SPEIER), used a larger number, and the larger numbers, in fact, are worth using in closing.

□ 1830

We've been talking, up until now, about \$3 billion, \$2.976 billion, that in fact is about the civilian employees of the Federal Government. They have a delinquency rate of approximately 3.62 percent. She mentioned other individuals, and I want to mention in closing their delinquency rate:

Civilian retired: understand, these are not individuals you can fire. They're retired, but their delinquency is 2.5 percent.

Military active duty: these are the men and women who have a different set of rules. They can be court-martialed if they don't live up to their obligations, 2 percent. Remember, that 2 percent includes all those who may eventually comply.

Military Reserve and Guard: these are the men and women who give up their day jobs, often taking a huge pay cut in doing so, often unanticipated, 2.4 percent.

Military retired, 4.3 percent. Mr. Speaker, I can't account for why, when military people retire, they find themselves seriously in arrears in taxes. But what I can say is when we look at 1 percent at the IRS, and 2 percent for those men and women getting a private's pay or a corporal's pay, they manage to keep their taxes straight.

The Federal workforce has a high compliance rate, as has been said repeatedly by my colleagues. Their compliance rate is nearly twice the rate of the public as a whole. Of course, the public as a whole includes over 7 percent unemployed, and it includes all kinds of other characteristics that lead to people being in default.

What we're saying here today is the IRS made a decision to have a compliance standard that has dramatically reduced failure to comply, and has put us in a situation where people of the IRS can say proudly: We pay our taxes. We pay our taxes at a 99 percent rate, and we deal with those who do not live up to promising to pay the rest.

We just want the same for the Federal workforce, and I believe Federal workers listening here today would agree that in fact since most of them do exactly what's right, all of them should be held to do what is exactly right. I urge passage of the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I strongly believe that all Americans, particularly Federal workers, should pay their taxes in full and on time, period. Fortunately, according to the most recent tax compliance statistics from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), the vast majority of Federal workers, more than 96 percent, pay their taxes in full and on time.

This admirable compliance rate is especially impressive when considering that the Nation's overall compliance rate is approximately 83 percent. Further, with an average delinquency rate for Federal employees of 3.3 percent, compared to an average delinquency rate of 7.4 percent for all American taxpayers, it is clear that our dedicated civil servants take their tax obligations seriously. In addition, for the small minority of Federal employees who fall behind on their taxes, the causes of financial hardship are not unique to Federal workers, but similar to the challenges and circumstances facing many middle class American families who find themselves temporarily unable to meet their tax obligations as a result of life-changing hardships, such as a divorce, serious illness, or a spouse losing a job.

Simply put, H.R. 249 is a solution in search of a problem.

The Congressional Budget Office cost estimate found that implementing H.R. 249 will cost taxpayers \$1 million in 2014 and about

\$500,000 in subsequent years, since it will not enhance revenues. Although it may seem counterintuitive that the so-called "Federal Employee Tax Accountability Act" would increase the deficit, it is logical when one considers current law. Presently, the law provides for a hierarchy of penalties based on the seriousness and willfulness of the offense related to improperly filing a tax return, and it provides IRS the authority to garnish wages to recoup owed taxes from employees.

H.R. 249 would replace this system with an inflexible mandate to fire any Federal employee with an outstanding tax debt to the Federal Government for which a public lien has been filed. If my Republican colleagues are so concerned about tax delinquency, then why not use the \$1 million cost of this legislation to hire additional IRS enforcement agents to chip away at our Nation's net tax gap of approximately \$385 billion?

We recently held a hearing where the head of the U.S. Government Accountability Office stated that the tax gap is the single largest item we can address to achieve savings. Could it be that actually recognizing such valuable work does not fit neatly with their negative narrative of the Federal workforce? Spending more than \$1 million to implement H.R. 249, which only targets our country's civil servants and does nothing to address our Nation's \$385 billion tax gap, is neither a prudent nor wise policy response. I urge all Members to oppose this legislation.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 249, the misleadingly named Federal Employee Tax Accountability Act. This bill unfairly singles out federal employees for punishment instead of applying a uniform set of rules to individuals who may be delinquent on their taxes.

All Americans should pay their taxes, and those who fail to do so should be penalized. But this bill denies public workers the full complement of due process rights that would be available to any other American under the same circumstances. In effect, this bill would require the firing of any public employee even if they are legitimately contesting their delinquency through the established process. There are laws and regulations on the books that address how tax delinquency should be handled and how public employees who are delinquent on their payments should be disciplined. By by-passing those procedures, this measure unfairly targets public employees simply because they work for the government.

Public servants work hard every day providing a wide array of public services for Americans, from helping to nurse our wounded veterans, to discovering cures and treatments for diseases that plague millions of American families, to protecting our food supply.

The passage of this bill is the latest in a series of unfair congressional attacks on public workers that has ranged from cutting their pay to reducing their benefits. And this bill arrives just as many of them face further pay cuts resulting from agency imposed furloughs.

Federal workers do not deserve to be treated like this.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 249.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on motions to suspend the rules previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

H.R. 1162, by the yeas and nays;

H.R. 882, by the yeas and nays;

H.R. 249, by the yeas and nays.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE IMPROVEMENT ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1162) to amend title 31, United States Code, to make improvements in the Government Accountability Office, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 408, nays 0, not voting 24, as follows:

[Roll No. 103]

YEAS—408

Aderholt
Alexander
Amash
Amodei
Andrews
Bachmann
Bachus
Barber
Barletta
Barr
Barrow (GA)
Barton
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Benishek
Bentivoglio
Bera (CA)
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Bonner
Boustany
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Braley (IA)
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)

Broun (GA)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burgess
Bustos
Butterfield
Cavert
Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter
Cartwright
Cassidy
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Chu
Cicilline
Clyburn
Coble
Coffman
Cohen
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Conaway

Connolly
Conyers
Cook
Cooper
Costa
Cotton
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Daines
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle
Duckworth
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)

Edwards
Ellison
Ellmers
Engel
Enyart
Eshoo
Esty
Farenthold
Farr
Fattah
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foster
Fox
Frankel (FL)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garcia
Gardner
Garrett
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gibson
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grijalva
Grimm
Guthrie
Gutierrez
Hahn
Hall
Hanabusa
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (WA)
Heck (NV)
Heck (WA)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Holding
Holt
Horsford
Hoyer
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huffman
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Israel
Issa
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Jenkins
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Kaptur
Kelly (IL)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kirkpatrick
Kline

Kuster
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Lankford
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
Latta
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loeb
Loftis
Long
Lowenthal
Lowe
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham
Lujan, Ben Ray
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Marino
Massie
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (CA)
McCarthy (NY)
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McGovern
McHenry
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
McNerney
Meadows
Meehan
Meeks
Messer
Mica
Michaud
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, George
Moran
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Negrete McLeod
Neugebauer
Noem
Nolan
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
O'Rourke
Olson
Owens
Palazzo
Pascarella
Pastor (AZ)
Paulsen
Payne
Pearce
Pelosi
Perlmuter
Perry
Peters (CA)
Peters (MI)
Peterson
Petri
Pingree (ME)
Pitts
Pocan
Poe (TX)
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Quigley
Radel

Rahall
Rangel
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Rohy
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruiz
Runyan
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schock
Schradler
Schwartz
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Southerland
Speier
Stewart
Stivers
Stockman
Stutzman
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Tiberi
Tierney
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Vislousky
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walorski
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters
Watt
Waxman
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Welch

Wenstrup	Wittman	Yoder
Whitfield	Wolf	Yoho
Williams	Womack	Young (AK)
Wilson (FL)	Woodall	Young (FL)
Wilson (SC)	Yarmuth	Young (IN)

NOT VOTING—24

Brown (FL)	Honda	Miller, Gary
Clarke	Keating	Moore
Clay	Lummis	Pallone
Cleaver	Lynch	Pittenger
Courtney	Marchant	Richmond
Davis, Rodney	Markey	Rohrabacher
Fincher	McDermott	Thornberry
Hastings (FL)	Meng	Westmoreland

□ 1857

Messrs. COHEN and GRIJALVA changed their vote from “yea” to “nay.”

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MOMENT OF SILENCE FOR VICTIMS OF BOSTON MARATHON EXPLOSIONS

(Mr. CAPUANO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CAPUANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the people in Boston who lost their lives and the many others who were seriously injured today. I hesitate to call what the event was; but whatever it was, it was a terrible tragedy. No matter how you measure it, whether official or unofficial terrorism, anyone who acts in such a manner is clearly an evil person and deserves to be called as such.

I know that today the rest of America stands with us, as we have stood with others before us, hopefully to never have to do it again. This event was not just a Boston event. The Boston Marathon is an international event that draws people from around the world. I would not be shocked if many of the people injured today were not just from Massachusetts. They're probably from other States and possibly—probably—other countries.

Today is a holiday in Massachusetts. It's a State holiday called Patriots Day. It's the day that we celebrate the actions of our patriots back in 1776 that started the Revolution that brought to birth this country. We remind ourselves regularly what it is to be an American, what it is to be a patriot, what it is to be a member of a society that cares for each other.

I know that the Members of this House will join me in wishing well all those people who were injured and sending our deepest condolences and sympathies to those people who were killed, as well as wishing well our men and women of law enforcement. I have absolutely full faith and confidence that they will find the people that have done this and bring them to justice so that we can all rest a little easier at some point.

The SPEAKER. The House will now observe a moment of silence in mem-

ory of the victims of today's attack in Boston.

CONTRACTING AND TAX ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 2013

The SPEAKER. Without objection, 5-minute voting will continue.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 882) to prohibit the awarding of a contract or grant in excess of the simplified acquisition threshold unless the prospective contractor or grantee certifies in writing to the agency awarding the contract or grant that the contractor or grantee has no seriously delinquent tax debts, and for other purposes, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 407, nays 0, not voting 25, as follows:

[Roll No. 104]

YEAS—407

Aderholt	Castro (TX)	Farr	Meehan	Scalise
Alexander	Chabot	Fattah	Meeks	Schakowsky
Amash	Chaffetz	Fitzpatrick	Messer	Schiff
Amodei	Chu	Fleischmann	Mica	Schneider
Andrews	Ciциlline	Fleming	Michaud	Schock
Bachmann	Clyburn	Flores	Miller (FL)	Schrader
Bachus	Coble	Forbes	Miller (MI)	Schwartz
Barber	Coffman	Fortenberry	Miller, George	Schweikert
Barletta	Cohen	Foster	Moran	Scott (VA)
Barr	Cole	Fox	Mullin	Scott, Austin
Barrow (GA)	Collins (GA)	Frankel (FL)	Mulvaney	Scott, David
Barton	Collins (NY)	Franks (AZ)	Murphy (FL)	Sensenbrenner
Bass	Conaway	Frelinghuysen	Murphy (PA)	Serrano
Beatty	Connolly	Fudge	Nadler	Sessions
Becerra	Conyers	Gabbard	Napolitano	Sewell (AL)
Benishek	Cook	Galleo	Neal	Shea-Porter
Bentivolio	Cooper	Garamendi	Negrete McLeod	Sherman
Bera (CA)	Costa	Garcia	Neugebauer	Shimkus
Billirakis	Cotton	Gardner	Noem	Shuster
Bishop (GA)	Cramer	Garrett	Nolan	Simpson
Bishop (NY)	Crawford	Gerlach	Nugent	Sinema
Bishop (UT)	Crenshaw	Gibbs	Nunes	Sires
Black	Crowley	Gibson	Nunnelee	Slaughter
Blackburn	Cuellar	Gingrey (GA)	O'Rourke	Smith (NE)
Blumenauer	Culberson	Goodlatte	Olson	Smith (NJ)
Bonamici	Cummings	Gosar	Owens	Smith (TX)
Bonner	Daines	Govdy	Palazzo	Smith (WA)
Boustany	Davis (CA)	Granger	Pallone	Southerland
Brady (PA)	Davis, Danny	Graves (GA)	Pascrell	Speier
Brady (TX)	DeFazio	Graves (MO)	Pastor (AZ)	Stewart
Braleigh (IA)	DeGette	Grayson	Paulsen	Stivers
Bridenstine	Delaney	Green, Al	Payne	Stockman
Brooks (AL)	DeLauro	Green, Gene	Pearce	Stutzman
Brooks (IN)	DelBene	Griffin (AR)	Pelosi	Swalwell (CA)
Brown (GA)	Denham	Griffith (VA)	Perlmutter	Takano
Brownley (CA)	Dent	Grijalva	Perry	Terry
Buchanan	DeSantis	Grimm	Peters (CA)	Thompson (CA)
Bucshon	DesJarlais	Guthrie	Peters (MI)	Thompson (MS)
Burgess	Deutch	Gutierrez	Peterson	Thompson (PA)
Bustos	Diaz-Balart	Hahn	Petri	Tiberi
Butterfield	Dingell	Hanabusa	Pingree (ME)	Tierney
Calvert	Doggett	Hanna	Pitts	Tipton
Camp	Doyle	Harper	Pocan	Titus
Campbell	Duckworth	Harris	Poe (TX)	Tonko
Cantor	Duffy	Hartzler	Polis	Tsongas
Capito	Duncan (SC)	Hastings (WA)	Pompeo	Turner
Capps	Duncan (TN)	Heck (NV)	Posey	Upton
Capuano	Edwards	Heck (WA)	Price (GA)	Valadao
Cardenas	Ellison	Hensarling	Price (NC)	Van Hollen
Carney	Ellmers	Herrera Beutler	Quigley	Vargas
Carson (IN)	Engel	Higgins	Radel	Veasey
Carter	Enyart	Himes	Rahall	Vela
Cartwright	Eshoo	Hinojosa	Rangel	Velázquez
Cassidy	Esty	Holding	Reed	Visclosky
Castor (FL)	Farenthold		Reichart	Wagner
			Renacci	Walberg
			Ribble	Walden
			Rice (SC)	Walorski
			Rigell	Walz
			Roby	Wasserman
			Roe (TN)	Schultz
			Rogers (AL)	Waters
			Rogers (KY)	Watt
			Rogers (MI)	Waxman
			Rokita	Weber (TX)
			Rooney	Webster (FL)
			Ros-Lehtinen	Welch
			Roskam	Wenstrup
			Ross	Whitfield
			Rothfus	Williams
			Roybal-Allard	Wilson (FL)
			Royce	Wilson (SC)
			Ruiz	Wittman
			Runyan	Wolf
			Ruppersberger	Womack
			Rush	Woodall
			Ryan (OH)	Yarmuth
			Ryan (WI)	Yoder
			Salmon	Yoho
			Sánchez, Linda	Young (AK)
			T.	Young (FL)
			Sanchez, Loretta	Young (IN)
			Sarbanes	

NOT VOTING—25

Brown (FL)	Honda	Miller, Gary
Clarke	Huizenga (MI)	Moore
Clay	Keating	Pittenger
Cleaver	Lummis	Richmond
Courtney	Lynch	Rohrabacher
Davis, Rodney	Marchant	Thornberry
Fincher	Markey	Westmoreland
Gohmert	McDermott	
Hastings (FL)	Meng	

□ 1908

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

FEDERAL EMPLOYEE TAX ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 2013

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HOLDING). The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 249) to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide that persons having seriously delinquent tax debts shall be ineligible for Federal employment, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 250, nays 159, not voting 23, as follows:

[Roll No. 105]

YEAS—250

Aderholt	DeFazio	Hultgren
Alexander	DelBene	Hunter
Amash	Denham	Hurt
Bachmann	Dent	Issa
Bachus	DeSantis	Jenkins
Barletta	DesJarlais	Johnson (OH)
Barr	Diaz-Balart	Johnson, Sam
Barrow (GA)	Dingell	Jones
Barton	Duffy	Jordan
Benishek	Duncan (SC)	Joyce
Bentivolio	Duncan (TN)	Kelly (PA)
Bera (CA)	Ellmers	Kilmer
Bilirakis	Esty	Kind
Bishop (UT)	Farenthold	King (IA)
Black	Fitzpatrick	Kingston
Blackburn	Fleischmann	Kinzinger (IL)
Bonner	Fleming	Kline
Boustany	Flores	Kuster
Brady (TX)	Forbes	Labrador
Bridenstine	Fortenberry	LaMalfa
Brooks (AL)	Fox	Lamborn
Brooks (IN)	Franks (AZ)	Lance
Brown (GA)	Frelinghuysen	Lankford
Brownley (CA)	Gallego	Latham
Buchanan	Garcia	Latta
Bucshon	Gardner	Lipinski
Burgess	Garrett	LoBiondo
Calvert	Gerlach	Long
Camp	Gibbs	Lucas
Campbell	Gingrey (GA)	Luetkemeyer
Cantor	Gohmert	Maffei
Capito	Goodlatte	Maloney, Sean
Capps	Gosar	Marino
Carney	Gowdy	Massie
Carter	Granger	Matheson
Cassidy	Graves (GA)	McCarthy (CA)
Castor (FL)	Graves (MO)	McCaul
Chabot	Griffin (AR)	McClintock
Chaffetz	Griffith (VA)	McHenry
Coble	Guthrie	McIntyre
Coffman	Hall	McKeon
Cole	Hanna	McKinley
Collins (GA)	Harper	McMorris
Collins (NY)	Harris	Rodgers
Conaway	Hartzler	McNerney
Cook	Hastings (WA)	Meadows
Cooper	Heck (NV)	Meehan
Costa	Heck (WA)	Messer
Cotton	Hensarling	Mica
Cramer	Herrera Beutler	Miller (FL)
Crawford	Himes	Miller (MI)
Crenshaw	Holding	Mullin
Cuellar	Hudson	Mulvaney
Culberson	Huelskamp	Murphy (FL)
Daines	Huizenga (MI)	Murphy (PA)

Neugebauer	Rogers (KY)	Stivers
Noem	Rogers (MI)	Stockman
Nugent	Rokita	Stutzman
Nunes	Ros-Lehtinen	Terry
Nunnelee	Roskam	Thompson (PA)
Olson	Ross	Tiberi
Palazzo	Rothfus	Tipton
Paulsen	Royce	Turner
Pearce	Ruiz	Upton
Perry	Runyan	Valadao
Peters (CA)	Ryan (OH)	Wagner
Peters (MI)	Ryan (WI)	Walberg
Petri	Salmon	Walden
Pitts	Scalise	Walorski
Poe (TX)	Schneider	Weber (TX)
Polis	Schock	Webster (FL)
Pompeo	Schwartz	Wenstrup
Posey	Schweikert	Whitfield
Price (GA)	Scott, Austin	Williams
Quigley	Sensenbrenner	Wilson (SC)
Radel	Sessions	Wittman
Reichert	Shimkus	Wolf
Renacci	Shuster	Womack
Ribble	Simpson	Woodall
Rice (SC)	Smith (NE)	Yoder
Rigell	Smith (NJ)	Yoho
Roby	Smith (TX)	Young (FL)
Roe (TN)	Southerland	Young (IN)
Rogers (AL)	Stewart	

NAYS—159

Amodei	Hahn	Perlmutter
Andrews	Hanabusa	Peterson
Barber	Higgins	Pingree (ME)
Bass	Hinojosa	Pocan
Beatty	Holt	Price (NC)
Becerra	Horsford	Rahall
Bishop (GA)	Hoyer	Rangel
Bishop (NY)	Huffman	Reed
Blumenauer	Israel	Rooney
Bonamici	Jackson Lee	Roybal-Allard
Brady (PA)	Jeffries	Ruppersberger
Braley (IA)	Johnson (GA)	Rush
Bustos	Johnson, E. B.	Sanchez, Linda
Butterfield	Kaptur	T.
Capuano	Kelly (IL)	Sanchez, Loretta
Cardenas	Kennedy	Sarbanes
Carson (IN)	Kildee	Schakowsky
Cartwright	King (NY)	Schiff
Castro (TX)	Kirkpatrick	Schrader
Chu	Langevin	Scott (VA)
Ciilline	Larsen (WA)	Scott, David
Clyburn	Larson (CT)	Serrano
Cohen	Lee (CA)	Sewell (AL)
Connolly	Levin	Shea-Porter
Conyers	Lewis	Sherman
Crowley	Loebuck	Sinema
Cummings	Lofgren	Sires
Davis (CA)	Lowenthal	Slaughter
Davis, Danny	Lowe	Smith (WA)
DeGette	Lujan Grisham	Speier
Delaney	(NM)	Swalwell (CA)
DeLauro	Lujan, Ben Ray	Takano
Deutch	(NM)	Thompson (CA)
Doggett	Maloney,	Thompson (MS)
Doyle	Carolyn	Tierney
Duckworth	Matsui	Titus
Edwards	McCarthy (NY)	Tonko
Ellison	McCollum	Tsongas
Engel	McGovern	Van Hollen
Enyart	Meeks	Vargas
Eshoo	Michaud	Veasey
Farr	Miller, George	Vela
Fattah	Moran	Velázquez
Foster	Nadler	Visclosky
Frankel (FL)	Napolitano	Walz
Fudge	Neal	Wasserman
Gabbard	Negrete McLeod	Schultz
Garamendi	Nolan	Waters
Gibson	O'Rourke	Watt
Grayson	Owens	Waxman
Green, Al	Pallone	Welch
Green, Gene	Pascrell	Wilson (FL)
Grijalva	Pastor (AZ)	Yarmuth
Grimm	Payne	Young (AK)
Gutierrez	Pelosi	

NOT VOTING—23

Brown (FL)	Honda	Miller, Gary
Clarke	Keating	Moore
Clay	Lummis	Pittenger
Cleaver	Lynch	Richmond
Courtney	Marchant	Rohrabacher
Davis, Rodney	Markley	Thornberry
Fincher	McDermott	Westmoreland
Hastings (FL)	Meng	

□ 1916

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California changed her vote from “yea” to “nay.”

So (two-thirds not being in the affirmative) the motion was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. ROONEY. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 105 on final passage of H.R. 249, I inadvertently voted “nay.” I would have voted “aye,” which is consistent with my past position on this legislation. In the 112th Congress, I voted “aye” on rollcall No. 538 on final passage of H.R. 828, which is virtually identical to H.R. 249.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 1101

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that my name be removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 1101.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Mississippi?

There was no objection.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has agreed to a concurrent resolution of the following titles in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. Con. Res. 8. Concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2014, revising the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal year 2013, and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2015 through 2023.

TERROR HITS BOSTON MARATHON

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today is Patriot's Day in Boston. To commemorate Boston's fierce spirit of independence, Bostonians host a world-wide marathon.

Today, as runners approached the finish line of the marathon, terror erupted: two explosions, 14 seconds apart. Two other bombs were also found by law enforcement. The scene was described as a war zone.

Amidst the chaos and blood-filled streets, there was a group of people who ran towards the danger, as they always do. They were America's first responders. They were there within moments. They disregarded their own safety to assist the wounded and secure the area.

Fellow marathon runners from all different States and countries also rescued strangers and the wounded. They helped treat their wounds and carried others to safety. Offers of help are coming from all over the United States.

There are two confirmed dead and over 100 injured.

The person of interest in custody is reportedly a 20-year-old Saudi national. Those responsible for this attack of death and terror must be brought to justice because, Mr. Speaker, justice is what we do in this country.

And that's just the way it is.

□ 1920

THE BOSTON TRAGEDY

(Ms. EDWARDS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I had planned to come to the floor this evening, as we do every Monday, to talk about the importance of climate change and the importance of this country addressing an issue that is so critical in front of us. But it seems tonight that it's actually quite more appropriate to offer my sincere condolences to the people of Boston, Massachusetts, but most especially to those who've been injured and lost their lives and to their families, and to offer up from the Fourth Congressional District and from all of us as Americans, that we stand united behind this city in its efforts to bring those who committed this great harm to justice, but also to stand with the families of first responders and all of those who are called to action.

THE BOSTON TRAGEDY

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, earlier today, two explosions tore through the finish line of the Boston Marathon, according to the Boston Police Department. These blasts have so far reportedly resulted in several deaths and perhaps more than 100 injuries.

Mr. Speaker, when faced with such adversity, now is the time for the American people to come together with their thoughts and prayers for those who have been injured and those lives that have been so tragically lost.

My thoughts and prayers are also with the Boston fire rescue and emergency medical personnel that, as I speak, are still on the job.

My thoughts and prayers are also with the Boston police and investigators, that they will quickly determine who is responsible for what appears to be a cruel, senseless, and cowardly act.

Today marks the 238th annual Patriots' Day in Boston. Mr. Speaker, let it be known that the evil that transpired today will not deter the courage of American patriots from the past, the present, or the future.

THE BOSTON TRAGEDY

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, it was my intent as well, as my colleague indicated, to come to the floor and discuss and urge the fast consideration of gun safety legislation and to speak as well to the jurisdictional issue of the Homeland Security Department working on cybersecurity.

But I, too, believe it is most important to offer my deepest sympathy to those who lost their lives in Boston on Patriots' Day in this Boston Marathon that all the world comes to; to thank the first responders, including nurses and doctors, volunteers, marathon runners, and those who came from around the world to be in this unifying event. We give to them our deepest concern.

I express my deepest sympathy to my colleagues who represent the Boston area, to Governor Deval Patrick, and to those families who lost loved ones and those who are now lingering in hospital beds. I wish them well and stand with my colleagues as we did on 9/11 and many other times, that those who perpetrated this heinous act will be brought to justice.

As a member of the Homeland Security Committee, Mr. Speaker, I also hope to look at venues and big events in the pending weeks and months so that we can reassess the safety and security for the American people. That is our charge and our responsibility, and I know that together we will be able to accomplish it.

Again, my deepest sympathy for this loss. We cannot express the depths of the feelings of sympathy that we have.

May God bless you, and may those who have lost their lives, may they rest in peace.

RECOGNIZING NATIONAL ROBOTICS WEEK

(Mr. PAULSEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, I want to just rise and congratulate and celebrate those that have been participating as a part of National Robotics Week this week.

Mr. Speaker, robotics have become an increasingly important part of our lives both in the workplace and at home, and the opportunities for this exciting industry grow daily.

Minnesota has now developed into a leading robotics ecosystem with dynamic organizations like Robotics Alley. Minnesota is now in the forefront of finding opportunities for robotics innovation and growth outside their traditional military role.

Last month I had a chance to visit the robotics lab at Weaver Lake Elementary School in Maple Grove, where I saw sixth grade students that were participating in a Google Hangout with

NASA engineers, learning important engineering skills. We should inspire these students and others to explore careers in robotics and other science, technology, engineering, and math fields.

I'm proud to say that Minnesota has now led the Nation in robotics innovation and education, and I'd like to wish all the students taking part in this May's Minnesota State High School League's robotics competition good luck.

THE BOSTON TRAGEDY

(Mr. GOHMERT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, this was to be a happy and glorious day in Boston. Because of the explosions that were set off by evil people, at least two have been killed, we're told, and scores of others wounded.

Our thoughts and our prayers go out for those who were wounded and injured and for the families of those who were killed. That will continue as the hurting continues, and may God help us to respond in a proper manner.

THE COMING EFFECTS OF THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SALMON). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the House leadership for allowing me to utilize this hour to talk about some of the coming effects of the Affordable Care Act.

THE BOSTON TRAGEDY

Mr. BURGESS. First, I do want to take a moment and join with so many of my colleagues who have just spoken on the floor in acknowledging the sacrifices that were made by first responders, people who ran toward the sound of the destruction this afternoon in Boston; and I certainly would recognize that even now, at this late hour, doctors and nurses are working in the emergency rooms in Boston to try to provide comfort to the afflicted and save life and limb for those who were damaged this afternoon, an act so astonishing in its cruelty, it is difficult to comprehend.

Mr. Speaker, in 5½ short months from right now, October 1, 2013, the full effects of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act are going to start to be felt around the country. It's important that we take a few moments this evening and think about the road ahead, think about the things that are supposed to come online on October 1, and think about the contingencies if those things are not able to be accomplished.

It was just a few weeks ago in this town when speaking to the American

Health Insurance group, one of the information technologists from Health and Human Services talked about this informational hub that is supposed to be developed by the Department of Health and Human Services, this informational hub that will allow people to go online to sign up for their benefits under the Affordable Care Act. The comments of this individual were quite revealing. Speaking to an AHIP group earlier this year, he said:

The time for debating about the size of the text on the screen or the color or whether it's a world-class user experience, that's what we used to talk about 2 years ago. Now let's just make sure it's not a Third World experience.

That's a pretty sobering admission from someone who is charged with providing the information hub, the information technology, the computer architecture that is supposed to be the underpinnings of the Affordable Care Act.

Bear in mind, it was 3 years ago, March of 2010, that the Affordable Care Act was signed into law. So 3 years later, billions of dollars spent in the implementation phase, and they're not sure if they can get this computer system up and running by October 1, which, by law, is when it is supposed to kick in.

□ 1930

That is a pretty significant admission from the information architect at the Department of Health and Human Services.

Now, when Barry Cohen, who is the head of the Center for Consumer Information and Insurance Oversight in the Department of Health and Human Services, was addressing the same group in response to a question, he was a little bit unclear as to whether or not they would be, in fact, ready on that October 1 deadline.

He said:

We'll have to wait. Then we'll be in a position to know which contingency plans we actually have to implement.

In other words, we can't plan for the contingency until we get there and see that a contingency plan is necessary. But, after all, what are contingency plans but those plans that are put in place because something unexpected may happen?

Last week, on the other side of the Capitol, in the other body, the Senator from West Virginia said:

ObamaCare is so complicated, and if it isn't done right the first time, it will just simply get worse.

That's a pretty startling pronouncement from someone who was, in fact, a pretty big cheerleader for the Affordable Care Act when it went through the Senate.

He went on to say:

I believe that the Affordable Care Act is probably the most complex piece of legislation ever passed by the United States Congress. Tax reform has obviously been huge, too, but up to this point, this—the Affordable Care Act—is just beyond comprehension.

Now, what does the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services have to say about all of this? She maintains that the Affordable Care Act will lower the cost of premiums for everyone; but in fact, in the past couple of weeks, she has admitted:

These folks will be moving into a really fully insured product for the first time, and so there may be a higher cost associated with getting into that market.

Translation: you're going to be paying more.

She goes on to say:

Some men and some younger customers could see their rates increase. Women and older customers could see their rates drop.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would submit that the coming rate shock is something for which people are actually unprepared. They have been told for 3 years that, after all, this is the Affordable Care Act, and it's going to make health care more affordable for all Americans; but the reality is somewhat different from the truth that is espoused by the Department of Health and Human Services.

Let's think about some of these things for just a minute, because they are important. Remember when the Affordable Care Act was debated? Remember the President's discussing the Affordable Care Act? Everyone wanted to talk about patients with preexisting conditions: patients with preexisting conditions are frozen out of the system; patients with preexisting conditions can't get care. Well, they meant couldn't get insurance, because people can get care. Nevertheless, this was proposed as an enormous problem. The Affordable Care Act was going to fix it.

How did the Affordable Care Act fix it?

Next year, when the exchanges are up and running or when Medicaid is expanded, people, indeed, may be incorporated into that system. Until that day arrives, they were to be taken care of through what is known as the Preexisting Condition Insurance Program, or PCIP, which is the Federal preexisting risk pool that was set up for the first time under the Affordable Care Act. Five billion dollars was put forward to help people with preexisting conditions with their premiums. Now, there was a little bit of a barrier to entry. You had to be uninsured for 6 months' time before you would be eligible for coverage under the preexisting condition program.

I've got to tell you, Mr. Speaker, I thought the Supreme Court was going to knock this thing out of the water. I thought there was no way in the world the highest court of the land could look at this thing and agree that it is constitutional under the Commerce Clause; that is, you can compel commerce in order to regulate it. I just knew that that day when the Supreme Court ruled that they would agree with me. In fact, they did; but then they went on to say that, in fact, since it's all a tax, Congress has the power to tax, and for that reason, it's not uncon-

stitutional, and the law was allowed to stand.

Leading up to that day that the Supreme Court made that pronouncement, I was so convinced that we as Members of Congress had an obligation to our constituents—to people who were, in fact, thinking that they were covered under the Affordable Care Act—to provide a contingency plan, particularly for those people who were covered under this new Federal preexisting condition insurance plan. Well, it turns out I wasn't right, and the law was constitutional.

But what would have happened last June 30 if the Supreme Court had said that it was unconstitutional, and the whole thing was struck down? As a consequence, people who were in the preexisting condition program would have found themselves without insurance, and that would have been a pretty significant event to have occurred. I felt that we needed to have a contingency plan to cover those individuals.

Now here we are some 6, 8 months later; and what happened in January of this year? The PCIP program ran out of money. It ran out of money at the end of January, and they said, We're not taking any more people into this program.

We had a hearing a couple of weeks ago in the Committee on Energy and Commerce and heard from a patient who had thought she was in the queue, in that waiting period, to get into the Federal preexisting condition program except that they suspended enrollment at the end of January. You've got to believe that there were a lot of people who were in that 6-month waiting period who were waiting for their time to come up so that they could, in fact, enroll in this preexisting condition program; but as of the end of January, they were shut out. So the committee wrote a letter to the President that said, We'd like to help you here. There are probably other moneys in the Affordable Care Act that can be moved around and can continue to cover these individuals until January 1 of 2014 when the exchanges and the Medicaid expansion and all of the goodies prescribed in the Affordable Care Act can come on line.

One of the things that we were told in leading up to the passage of the Affordable Care Act is that there were millions of people who fell into this preexisting condition trap. In fact, on the floor of the House, you heard people quote figures of 8 to 12 million people. The Speaker of the House at that time, Speaker PELOSI, said 125 million people had preexisting conditions. In fact, that was a little bit of a misnomer because, when you look at the people who are covered by insurance in this country, the vast majority is covered under what's called a "large group plan," or what we know as "employer-sponsored insurance." A preexisting condition exclusion can occur in that environment, but it's much, much rarer, and there are typically open enrollment periods in which a person can

get taken on to his employer's insurance. Now, for 65 percent of the population, that's not the issue. Certainly, for people in the small group market and in the individual market, in the small group market and in the individual market, there was a problem.

On the numbers that people quoted prior to the passage of the Affordable Care Act—8 million, 10 million, 12 million people—how many people were in the Federal preexisting condition program at the end of June when I worried that the Supreme Court was going to strike the whole thing down?

There were 65,000 people and certainly every one of those individuals with a compelling story—and not a small population but a manageable population. If we are just talking about trying to correct a problem for 65,000 people in a country of 310 million, I would submit that we can do that without destroying the existing program, the employer-sponsored insurance, that people said they liked and wanted to keep.

Remember, if you like what you have, you can keep it?

Instead of taking care of a problem for a relatively finite but compelling population, the administration and, at the time, the congressional Democrats pushed through a bill of “we just want to control everything about your health care.” They got their wish, but now we had probably 100,000 people in January who were in the Federal preexisting condition program, and now no new people can sign up for it because it is going to run out of money.

Mr. Speaker, I would submit that there is other money available in things like, we call them, “slush funds” that were built into the Affordable Care Act; things like the Medicare Modernization Act; things like the fund that is to allow for other activities in the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. So, by just shifting some money around, these people who have preexisting conditions, in fact, could be taken care of, and we have the ability to do that. Really, it would be a relatively easy lift at this point, and perhaps next week we'll see legislation on the floor.

Can you imagine if this had been a Republican President who had taken people off the Federal preexisting condition program? You would have heard about it from every newspaper in the country, and every television outlet in the country would have talked about it. How much did you hear? Well, you're probably hearing about it tonight for the first time. You'll hear about it a little bit more next week. People don't want to talk about the failures embedded in the Affordable Care Act, but it is important that we do so.

□ 1940

Now, when this bill was passed into law, March of 2010, the then-Speaker of the House, Speaker PELOSI, claimed that the Affordable Care Act would cre-

ate 4 million jobs, 400,000 jobs almost immediately. Well, that hasn't turned out to be exactly true, either.

The Federal Reserve reported that employers are citing the uncertainty embedded in the Affordable Care Act as reasons for layoffs in companies and the reluctance to hire new employees.

The application that was proposed by the Department of Health and Human Services for people to fill out to get coverage in the exchanges next year actually asks an applicant if their job is no longer offering health coverage in the next year. Clearly embedded in the Affordable Care Act was a risk to job creation in this country, and we're now seeing that actually come into being.

The law does not treat everyone the same. It creates essentially a new underclass. It promises universal coverage, but it leaves some workers' families without coverage. Now, one of the most significant embedded problems in the Affordable Care Act is if an individual is working and their employer is providing them employer-sponsored insurance, that employer is required to do that; or if that employee looks for coverage in the exchange, that employer may be fined. But if the employer provides that employer-sponsored insurance, great. But he doesn't have to apply it, he doesn't have to provide that insurance to their family. This is a significant problem because that family, which right now may be covered, next year may not.

But here's the other part of that. That family would not be eligible for a subsidy in the insurance exchange because the employer is providing the benefit to the employee, but there was nothing in the law that said they had to continue family coverage. So who is going to be affected, primarily women and children. A headline in the Fort Worth Star Telegram a few weeks ago, and the Fort Worth Star Telegram is generally supportive of the administration and generally supportive of the Affordable Care Act, but under their headline was, “500,000 Children to Lose Health Benefits Under the Affordable Care Act.”

This was actually not through something that was revealed in the Department of Health and Human Services, but rather a rule that was proposed by the Department of the Treasury and the Internal Revenue Service. It turns out that children who lose insurance because the primary employee will be covered but the family will not, those children who lose insurance will not be fined by the IRS for not complying with the insurance mandate; but that is scant consolation for the fact that now they have no insurance and they have no reasonable way of achieving that because, after all, the cost for insurance is going to significantly increase under the Affordable Care Act.

There is a 21-page application for Americans who feel that they should be covered under the Medicaid expansion. A 21-page application is pretty significant. It does ask some questions that

you have to ask yourself, are they germane to someone who is applying for health insurance. But nevertheless, the application is out there. It's in the public domain, albeit it's a draft at this point. My hope is that the Department of Health and Human Services will refine that, but most of the 27- to 35-year-olds that I know are not going to spend a lot of time filling out a 21-page application.

We were told in the run-up to the passage of this law that it would, in fact, pay down the deficit. It was \$142 billion over 10 years, but it was supposed to reduce the deficit. Does anybody really believe that anymore? Of course not. And now the further evaluation of the costs and the expansive costs that are going to occur under the Affordable Care Act, probably an additional \$1.5 trillion, at a conservative estimate, as to what this will add to the deficit over the next 10 years, and this is just for the subsidies and the exchanges and for the Medicaid expansion alone.

Now, why does that matter? Mr. Speaker, it matters because in just a few short weeks, the statutory borrowing authority of the United States will be met or exceeded. And this Congress, this House, will once again be involved in another discussion about raising the debt limit. In July of 2011, we had this discussion. It was pretty acrimonious and attracted a lot of attention and a lot of publicity, none of it good. We're going to have that same fight occur again.

A lot of people are concerned about the sequester. They say, we wish the sequester had never happened. But remember, the sequester was what the President proposed in order to get the expansion of the debt limit to a point where he would not have to deal with it again until after election day 2012. So the President got his wish. He said the sequester was good; it will allow us to get past this point and to move on. But now people are dealing with the aftermath.

I would just ask you, what is the sequester going to look like in the summer of 2013, because the debt limit will not be just expanded to cover the obligations. There is going to have to be some spending discipline that goes along with that. I don't know what that will be. I'm not privy to those discussions, but will all the money that is promised to be there for the Medicaid expansion, for the subsidies in the exchange, will it in fact be there, or will that be exposed to some type of sequester-type device? I don't know the answer to that question, but those are questions in which this House will have to deal in literally a few short weeks' time.

There has been significant tax policy that has gone into effect since the Affordable Care Act was passed. Just this year, five new taxes—significant taxes—have occurred, as a result of the Affordable Care Act. There's a payroll tax that has increased almost 1 percent, 0.9 percent.

A payroll tax for people who earn over \$200,000 a year, joint filers of \$250,000 a year, some people look at that and say we knew that Medicare was getting into trouble. Maybe that is a good thing that that payroll tax for Medicare has gone up. Well, it might be except the money doesn't stay in the Medicare trust fund. It's collected, and then it immediately goes into the general revenue in order to pay for or offset the cost of the subsidies that are going to exist in the insurance exchange.

One of the more onerous taxes that was begun on January 1 was a 2.4 percent gross receipts tax on medical devices. Class II and class III medical devices as defined by the Food and Drug Administration are now subject to a 2.4 percent gross receipts tax. That's not a tax on profits; that's a tax on gross sales. It is significant. Sure, there are some big companies that will make due; but really it's the small entrepreneur who is developing medical devices, and this is happening all the time. Those individuals are the ones who are going to be particularly hard hit. And, as you can imagine, it may reduce some of that entrepreneurial activity or send it overseas.

We already have a Food and Drug Administration that's sometimes difficult to deal with as far as getting things approved. Europe and Central Asia are not so difficult to deal with. And, hey, by the way, there's not that gross receipts tax. Perhaps we ought to move our manufacturing somewhere else. And, of course, the jobs go with the manufacturing.

There's been a change in what are called flexible spending accounts. Flexible spending accounts are that money which you are able to designate at the beginning of every calendar year, and you can have pretax dollars that can be spent for recurrent medical expenses.

This now has been capped at \$2,500 a year. The amount was much higher previously; but under the Affordable Care Act, in order to offset some of the additional costs of the Affordable Care Act, they said we're going to cap those flexible spending account contributions to \$2,500. That started this year.

So if you've got a recurring medical expense that occurs every year, and think about someone with a family member who has a chronic medical condition or a family with a special needs child where they wanted to be able to set some dollars aside at the beginning of the year, not have them taxed so that they could pay for whatever it was that was going to be required, they are now capped at \$2,500. People are going to very quickly find that amount is exceeded, and that they have been caught in this so-called FSA trap, or flexible spending account trap.

For people who deduct medical expenses from their income tax, and as you know, currently for the last tax year for which we all just prepared our taxes and filed them this evening,

there was a 7.5 percent exclusion from your adjusted gross income, that is, until your medical expenses equaled 7.5 percent of your adjusted gross income, you didn't get to deduct medical expenses from your tax. That amount has actually increased to 10 percent for next year. So people who were accustomed, people with a lot of medical expenses who were accustomed to keeping up with those receipts and then being able to deduct those medical expenses as they exceeded 7.5 percent of their adjusted gross income, they're now not going to be able to deduct those expenses until after 10 percent of their adjusted gross income.

□ 1950

So who have we punished here?

We have punished the families with special needs children. We have punished people with chronic medical conditions. We've basically gone after the sickest Americans to say you're going to pay a little bit more for what everyone else is going to receive in the Affordable Care Act.

There is going to be a tax on insurance companies—I'm sorry—a tax on insurance policies that people will have to pay. This will go into a couple of different accounts, a couple of different funds, but the bottom line is it costs more every year to buy your insurance.

And then, beginning in 2018, the so-called tax on Cadillac insurance plans kicks in. And who's this going to affect?

Well, yes, it will affect higher-income earners who get a generous insurance policy. But it also affects union members whose insurance policies were part of their collective bargaining agreements over time, and those policies which now are going to be judged to be Cadillac plans will actually be taxed at a much higher rate starting in 2018.

There was supposed to be an exchange set up for small business. It was called the SHOP Exchange, small business health policies. Twenty-nine times there were deadlines that were missed in setting up the SHOP exchanges. And now, just in the past couple of weeks, the Department of Health and Human Services said, it's pretty tough, pretty complicated. We don't know if we can do it or not, but we're giving ourselves another year. This won't happen until 2015.

I think this is one of the things that really caused some of the consternation over in the Senate because in the other body this was one of the deals that they made in order to get the Affordable Care Act passed, in order to get it to the floor of the Senate in the fall of 2009.

It is instructive for people to remember how this thing came to be in the first place. Now, in the summer of 2009, the committees of jurisdiction here in the House—Ways and Means, Energy and Commerce, Education and Labor—all debated a version of the House health care reform bill.

Now, make no mistake about it. I think it was a crummy bill. H.R. 3200

was the number. It did go through the committee process. It was amended several times in the various House committees. From there it went to the Speaker's desk, where it was all kind of consolidated; all three committee products were kind of melded into one, and then it came to the floor of the House, doubled in size, during that 2- or 3-month hiatus, and was passed by the House of Representatives in the fall, in November of 2009.

Not a single—well, one Republican vote, and the rest carried by Democrats. Thirty-five Democrats voted against it because of some of the problems contained within that legislation.

But the important thing is, as bad as I think it is, it did go through the regular House process. We may have been curtailed in the number of amendments we could offer in committee. Our time for debate in committee may have been limited but, nevertheless, it did come through the committee process.

Not so in the Senate. H.R. 3200 has never been seen or heard from again. It passed the House, went over to the Senate to await activity, and there it went, up into the ether somewhere. No one really knows what happened to it.

But, wait a minute. There's a health care law that was signed by the President in March of 2010. How did the health care law come into being?

Well, the House had passed another bill in July of 2009. It was H.R. 3590, dealt with housing. I think it passed the House with very few negative votes. But it was a housing bill.

It went over to the Senate to await further activity, and that's the bill that was picked up by Senate leadership that was brought to the floor of the Senate and amended. The amendment read "strike all after the enacting clause and insert," striking, of course, the language for the housing bill, which was the base bill, and inserting health care language, and that was the bill that the Senate passed late on Christmas Eve in 2009, right ahead of a big snowstorm that was coming to town.

All the Senators wanted to get out so they passed this bill. Sixty votes. Not a single Republican vote. Passed with entirely Democratic votes.

Now, under normal circumstances, H.R. 3590, which was now the Senate health care bill, and H.R. 3200, which was the House bill, would have gone to a conference committee. They would have worked rough edges out. They would have worked the differences out between the two bills, and a conference report would have come back to both Houses of Congress, the House and the Senate, and that would have been voted on, up or down.

The problem was that, remember, it took 60 votes to pass it on the Senate side. Shortly after H.R. 3590 passed on the Senate side, a Democratic seat was lost. Scott Brown was elected from Massachusetts and, as a consequence, that 60th vote was no longer available to the Democratic leadership in the Senate.

So what are they going to do?

Well, they said that the House will just simply have to pass H.R. 3590. After all, it was a House bill that was passed already by the House in July of 2009, amended by the Senate, to become a health care bill. All that is required for it to become law is for the House to take a vote; will the House now concur with the Senate amendment to H.R. 3590. So many as in favor, say aye.

If that is a simple majority, 218 votes here in the House of Representatives, if that is a simple majority, then that's the end of the discussion. The bill goes down the street to the White House for a signing ceremony, and that's exactly what happened.

Now, it took 3 months to accomplish that, because no one here in the House thought H.R. 3590 was a very good legislative product.

In fact, let's be honest, Mr. Speaker. It was a rough draft that had been produced by the Senate Finance Committee, the staff of the Senate Finance Committee, as a vehicle to get the Senate to conference with the House. They never expected for this thing to be signed into law. It was a vehicle to get to a conference to then sit down with the House, and let's work out these differences between the two of us, and then we'll get a conference committee product to come to the floor. But it didn't work out.

As a consequence, the bill that was signed into law was one that was never intended to become law. It was a product produced by the staff of the Senate Finance Committee as a vehicle to get them out of town before Christmas Eve so that they could then get to the conference committee where the real work, the real work of writing this health care law would occur.

The American people were cheated by this process, Mr. Speaker. And now, we're left to deal with the consequences.

And what are the consequences?

500,000 children, according to the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, being taken off their parents' employer-sponsored insurance. People in the pre-existing program who had been waiting patiently for their turn are now told, we're sorry, it's full up. No more space. You can't come in.

It didn't have to be this way. There were good ideas on both sides that could have been taken into account.

One of the fundamental questions I think we have to ask ourselves over and over again is where were the country's Governors when this bill was actually written. Well, of course it was written by the Senate Finance Committee staff, so the Governors were nowhere in the room. A lot of deals that were struck between some of the special interest groups and the White House were all done down at the White House in July of 2009. The Nation's governors weren't involved in that.

Why were the Nation's governors so reluctant to accept the exchanges, the Medicaid expansion?

Well, the answer, Mr. Speaker, is because they were dealt out of the process. And then, the rulemaking that started happening after the law was signed began to scare them, but a lot of the rules were held until after Election Day.

The rule governing essential health benefits—what Governor in their right mind is going to sign on to an exchange program where they don't even know what they're going to be required to cover? They don't know how much money it is going to cost them?

Well, it's no surprise that 26 States said no dice to the exchange. An additional six States said maybe we'll do a partnership, but you go ahead and set the program up through the Federal level first.

And as consequence, the Office of Personnel Management is now required to set up exchanges for 26 States, plus six that might want partnership, and that's a tall order, which is why Gary Cohen said, I'm not sure we're going to need a contingency plan, but we can't know what contingency we have until we actually get there.

I will submit there is going to be a need for a contingency plan. The sooner that the agencies admit that to the appropriate committees in the House and Senate, the sooner they can begin to work on a solution for a problem.

Because, Mr. Speaker, let's face it. January 1 of 2014, there's going to be an emergency room, there's going to be an operating room, there's going to be a delivery room where a patient and doctor are going to come in contact with each other, and they don't need the uncertainty of what this legislation has dealt them.

I thank the Speaker for the time this evening, and I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 2000

IMMIGRATION REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ROTHFUS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) is recognized for the remainder of the hour as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my privilege to be recognized by you to address you here on the floor of the United States House of Representatives.

On this tragic day, as we watch the events unfold in Boston, each of our hearts go out and our prayers go out to the victims, the victims' families, and all of those who are doing so much to put back together the great city of Boston while our hearts bleed for the whole country. I am, I think, optimistic since the President—at least his Office—has declared this to be an act of terror. It clearly is—the timing, the planning, the strategy. I believe we will bring those perpetrators to justice. Many of us fear that this is another episode in a long series of episodes of

terrorist attacks against Americans in the United States. And it troubles us more when it happens here rather than when Americans are attacked anywhere else in the world.

But, Mr. Speaker, I add to this point that we are a resilient people. We are proud, self-confident, tenacious people. And if anyone attacks Americans, thinking somehow that it weakens our resolve, it has the exact opposite effect. It strengthens our resolve, it brings us to action, it galvanizes us to action. Even though as years go by and we look back on some of these attacks on Americans and that our vigor might diminish because we may think we have resolved some of the issues with regard to the terrorists that are attacking us, Mr. Speaker, I announce here to you tonight that the American people are going to stand together. We stand with the people in Boston, we stand with the Massachusetts delegation, we stand with the Northeast, we stand with the 50 States. We stand together in defiance of the kind of terrorism that attacks Americans.

We stand for some things here, Mr. Speaker, and there are a series of components of what it takes to be an American or become an American. It starts with the list of the pillars of American exceptionalism, which along the line of that list, Mr. Speaker, are freedom of speech, religion, the press, freedom of assembly, keep and bear arms. They're the property rights. In our judicial branch there's no double jeopardy. You are tried by a jury of your peers. You can face your accuser. The powers that are not delineated in the Constitution, enumerated in the Constitution, are devolved to the States or the people, respectively. All of these are components of American exceptionalism.

Along with that, there's another component: free enterprise capitalism. And there's a piece to this also, which is the rule of law. It says in the Constitution "the supreme law of the land." And we must abide by the Constitution and the language in it. The language in the Constitution isn't something that can be redefined away from us, but instead, Mr. Speaker, it is a written contract. It's a contract from the generations that ratified the Constitution and the subsequent amendments to the succeeding generations.

Our charge is to preserve, protect, and defend this Constitution of the United States. And if we find that the wisdom of our predecessors didn't foresee circumstances in the current area where we are, we have an obligation not to redefine the Constitution, defend always the language of the Constitution and the understanding of the meaning of that language at the time of ratification, but instead have enough courage to use the tools to amend the Constitution if we need to. The supreme law of the land.

The rule of law is an essential pillar of American exceptionalism. Without it, we wouldn't have a reason to uphold

the Constitution. It could be defined away from us. And I often speak to groups of people and inform them that the Constitution guarantees us these rights but it can't be guaranteed and upheld generation after generation unless each generation defends the language that's in the Constitution, the original understanding of the language in the Constitution, and exercises those constitutional rights.

Can you imagine, Mr. Speaker, if our society decided at some point we're not going to any longer exercise our freedom of assembly? And so for some reason if the stigma of society would discourage assembly, for us to come together and talk about the issues that we want to have our dialogue and exchange on, if we didn't exercise that, the next generation could hardly get out the Constitution and look at it and say, Well, in here it says we have freedom of assembly, and reinstall it. Or, for example, if we gave up our Second Amendment right to keep and bear arms, can you imagine, Mr. Speaker, our children, our grandchildren, and our great grandchildren after a generation or two or three going without any right to keep or bear arms, opening up this Constitution, dusting off this document and pointing to it and saying, There is a right here to keep and bear arms?

You cannot reestablish these rights that are there in this Constitution if we once stop exercising them. That's why we exercise freedom of speech, we must exercise freedom of religion, and we must exercise freedom of the press. All of these rights are rights that we have to utilize. They are rights that define for us in this Constitution, within it, the supreme law of the land, the rule of law.

There's another component of American exceptionalism as well, aside from these rights that are in the Constitution and the free enterprise piece, which is something that gives our economy its utmost vigor. I would advise people that are preparing to take the naturalization test to become an American citizen by choice rather than birth, that's a choice by the educational foundation that they understand our history, our language. One of the questions that will be there is: what's the economic system of the United States?

Mr. Speaker, the answer to that is free enterprise capitalism. That's what gives our economy its vigor. And when we move away from free enterprise capitalism, when we move towards government management of our economy, government bailouts, government deciding who's too big to be allowed to fail, eventually so much of our private sector economy gets co-opted by government that we lose the vigor of free enterprise capitalism and we lose some of the promise of the ascendancy of the great American civilization.

There's another piece of this also that I speak to relatively often, Mr. Speaker, and that's American vigor.

That's the last component of the American exceptionalism that I'll list here tonight.

American vigor. Now where does that come from? Well, we have natural-born American citizens that are part of this civilization and culture. These natural-born American citizens are the descendants of those who came here willingly with a dream. When they came here with a dream, they saw the promise of the Statue of Liberty. And in the image of the Statue of Liberty are the list of American exceptionalism components, the pillars of exceptionalism that I talked about, most of them within the Bill of Rights. But our forefathers were inspired to come here in order to realize their dream. They saw that they couldn't make it in their home country where they hoped to be able to do that and they couldn't realize their potential in their home country. They knew there were challenges here. They came here to rise to the level of their potential. Because of that, there's been a natural filter that has been built. And it's the willing legal immigrants that came to America who were inspired by these pillars of American exceptionalism which are embodied within the image of the Statue of Liberty, and they decided they would find a way to get on a trip or travel, whatever way they could to come to the United States, get in line to become a legal immigrant to the United States. And so many of them have dynamically and dramatically contributed to our economy, our society, our culture, and our civilization. We are that kind of an America.

But there's a unique American character, a unique American spirit, a unique American vigor that comes from those who came here in a legal way that have contributed to our society and our culture and the things that they have taught their children and the things that their children have taught their children and each succeeding generation on down. We're a unique character and quality here. We're not just the descendants of Western Europe or Latin America or wherever it might be. We are the cream of the crop of every donor civilization on the planet that has sent people here to become Americans. That's a special charge. It's a special responsibility. It's distinct from any other Nation in the world. We're the only Nation in the world where people can come here and become American. It doesn't work to go to Norway to become Norwegian or Holland to become Dutch. But it does work to come to the United States of America, embrace the civilization, embrace this culture, embrace this Constitution, take the test to qualify for naturalization, become an American citizen.

□ 2010

I remember going to a naturalization ceremony in the old Executive Office Building. I remember the speaker that day—as there were maybe 125 new

American citizens naturalized that day—and he said: Look out that window. When you look out the window of the Indian room at the Old Executive Office Building, you see into the South Lawn and the White House from the side. He said: From this day, the person who lives in this house next door—pointing to the White House—is no more American than you are.

Now, that's a profound statement. It's true in the United States, and I don't believe it's true anywhere else.

So we have a special mission, Mr. Speaker. We have a special responsibility, a responsibility to promote God-given liberty and freedom throughout the world, a responsibility to hold free enterprise capitalism together, a responsibility to exercise our freedom of speech, religion, the press and assembly, and our right to keep and bear arms—all of these things are in the Bill of Rights.

But I fear that too many in this Congress and too many across this country have lost touch, lost contact with what that means. And so, because of political purposes, it seems to me there are a number of them that are trying to devise a way to make accommodations out of political expediency that in the end undermine one of the most essential pillars of American exceptionalism, the rule of law.

Now I take you back to 1986. In 1986, there was a long debate—it was months long; in fact it may have been nearly 2 years long—a debate about what to do about 800,000 people who were in the United States unlawfully. Through that debate, they worked out an accommodation. The 800,000 was more or less generally understood to be 1 million people; and Ronald Reagan, in his honest way, was reluctantly persuaded to sign the 1986 Amnesty Act. When he did that, the promise was that we would get enforcement, that immigration law would be enforced with the utmost vigor of the executive branch of the United States Government. That was the promise that was made by this Congress. It was a promise that was made by the President of the United States, Ronald Reagan, who was as trustworthy as any President in my lifetime, as principled, and one whom I've long admired and, as I said, only let me down twice in 8 years of the Presidency of the United States. But he made a commitment to enforce the 1986 Amnesty Act.

He was honest with us; he called it amnesty. The definition of amnesty then is the definition that we have of amnesty today. To grant amnesty is to pardon immigration lawbreakers and reward them with the objective of their crime.

Now, what happened back in 1986? The people that were unlawfully present in the United States were pardoned, with some exceptions—those that had felony records, for example, those that were violent criminals, and some others—but generally they were pardoned. They were given an instantaneous legalization. The exchange was

that those that were in the United States at the time of—there would be a cut off—and those who came after would be faced with the full enforcement of the law.

This, in 1986, was going to be the last amnesty ever. The rule of law was to be restored, and there would never be the promise of an amnesty again. Well, unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, that didn't hold up. History knows that. History notes that. There have actually been six or seven less significant amnesties along the way since that period of time, each one of them drip, drip, drip, making another promise and another promise to people that if they could just get into the United States, if they could just live in the shadows, eventually there would be another amnesty that would come along. By the way, the 1986 amnesty, that 800,000 to 1 million people became 3 million people. Three million people were granted amnesty back then because of document fraud and underestimations of the numbers of people.

So we're watching as the Gang of Eight will presumably introduce a bill tomorrow in the United States Senate. We don't know with confidence what is in that bill, but we do know all of the initiatives that have come from the open-borders side of this argument. We know what Democrats think—they're politically empowered. They're for any kind of amnesty. They'd do instantaneous citizenship. They would mail it in if they could because they see a significant political gain. But on the Republican side of the aisle, it seems to me that they've suspended a full understanding of what goes on in history or what would take place contemporarily.

So what are we trying to accomplish, is the question, Mr. Speaker. I'm convinced that the President, who came before the Republican Conference, he made a statement to us and he said: Republicans, you will never win another national election unless you first pass comprehensive immigration reform. I don't know that we should be looking to the President of the United States for political advice for Republicans in the first place.

The second part he said was: I'm trying to help you Republicans. Some of the people in that room believed that, Mr. Speaker. I did not, and neither do thinking Americans believe that the President of the United States, who has been charged with attempting to, let me say, significantly weaken the Republican Party, would be seriously trying to improve the Republican Party.

What are we trying to accomplish, Mr. Speaker? Well, I'd like to restore the rule of law. I hear Members of this House and Senate talk to me about, for example, they'll say: Well, the President of the United States has refused to enforce immigration law. That's true. He has unconstitutionally, lawlessly refused to enforce immigration law. He has defined classes of people that will be waived as subjects of en-

forcement. Now, I have people on my side of the aisle come over and they say we have de facto amnesty. No, we have literal amnesty. We have factual amnesty, not de facto amnesty.

The President has declared, in a lawless fashion, amnesty for those who do not threaten him politically. That's large classes of people, in an unconstitutional fashion, he has announced that they are issuing work permits, creating a work permit/visa for people that are in the country illegally when the law requires that they come out and enforce the law rather than grant them a work permit.

So, de facto amnesty? No. It's real and it's literal amnesty. And now it seems as though many people on my side of the aisle have leaped to this conclusion that this amnesty exists—call it real, literal, or de facto amnesty, it exists—and so the only way we can deal with that is to go ahead and officially act and legalize so that we can somehow resolve this issue. This is an issue that's been created by many, many years of failure to enforce immigration law. But the idea that Congress should ratify an unconstitutional lawless act on the part of the President is beyond my comprehension as to how that solves the problem.

I hear one of the voices in this immigration issue say, we will never get border security unless we first legalize the people that are here illegally. Well, how does that follow? How is that rational, that we'll never get border security? We have a President who's not going to enforce the law. We know that workplace enforcements are down 70 percent under this President. Janet Napolitano declares that we have fewer interdictions on the border; therefore, that proves that there are fewer border crossings. Well, Mr. Speaker, it doesn't prove that. If you want to have fewer interdictions, you just slow down the enforcement on the border.

Now, I actually do believe that there are fewer attempted border crossings. That's a component of the economics. But we should look and see what's the level of illegal drug interdictions. That will tell us something about how many illegal border crossings there are and how porous our border is. We should look and see how many people end up fatalities in the desert trying to come into the United States across Arizona, for example, or the other States. That will give you some real data on what kind of border crossings we have.

We have the question of granting people a path to citizenship, and the argument, Mr. Speaker, that somehow this is not a path to citizenship when it's a path to a green card; the argument that a green card is not a path to citizenship. If a green card is not a path to citizenship, then there is no path to citizenship here in the United States, but of course we know that it is. A green card is a path to citizenship, and a path to a green card is just a little bit longer path to a path to citizenship. The American people understand that; it's not a mystery.

So some of the proposals are also, well, in this exchange, instantaneously—this is a proposal that will come out of the Senate tomorrow—they will instantaneously legalize everybody that's here in the United States illegally, and then set about, if someone is discovered who happens to have a felony on their record, has committed a violent crime, perhaps, maybe three serious misdemeanors, they might package them up and send them back to where they can wake up legally in their home country. They might do that. But meanwhile, you can see that there's no will to enforce the law for law breakers. There's no will to do that.

□ 2020

So if they pass their legislation—instantaneously 11 million or maybe 20 million or more people are legalized—can we imagine that if all of these conditions that they write into this bill as far as border security are concerned and operational control of the border and an Entry/Exit System and an E-Verify system, if all of that goes into place, they say then there's going to be a path to citizenship? Can we imagine that once people are legalized that they would ever be delegatized because of the failure of the executive branch to follow through on all these promises that are going to be made of the executive branch by the legislative branch of government by presumably a President who hasn't followed through on his oath of office to take care that the laws be faithfully executed?

So here's one presumption. They'll want to put E-Verify into this and then make E-Verify mandatory. Therefore, that would mean that we would have full enforcement and the jobs in the workplace. Well, no, we won't have enforcement unless the executive branch enforces.

They've already told ICE to stand down. I can give you a whole list of circumstances by which ICE is prohibited from enforcing existing law by this executive branch of government. And who could imagine that E-Verify, if it passes and becomes mandatory law, is going to be enforced to the extent that it's effective?

I say, instead, just simply clarify that wages and benefits paid to people illegally living in the United States are not business expenses. When that happens, then you'll see employers make that decision because they will not want the tax, the penalty, and the interest liability that goes along with a tax violation.

That's a clear piece. It's not a piece of policy that's being discussed by these people because they are not serious about solving this problem in the way rule of law people would be.

E-Verify won't be enforced adequately to be effective. It could be passed. I think it could be passed as a condition.

The next one is, finish the border fence. We have that language in place

now. We passed 700-mile border fence language called the Secure Fence Act. Actually, 854 miles, and that's because the border is crooked in some places, and we've got about 40 miles of effective fence.

And so follow through on the existing law that we have is my recommendation. We don't have to have a new law to build a fence. Build the fence, secure the border and then come back and tell us that you've actually accomplished that. Let's watch this thing with drones and see if that's taking place, and other security. We know from the last drone report that the Border Patrol, even drone assisted, were not interdicting half of those that attempted to cross the border, and that number in that sector of the border was over 3,000.

Then the argument about operational control of the border. You would hand that over to who? A border commission to be named later. Or hand it over to the judgment of Janet Napolitano, who has already declared that they have significant operational control of the border. I don't know anybody that's buying that particular line.

And then they would also implement an Entry/Exit program. Well, we have that. It's called US-VISIT. It's been in law since about 1996, when it first began to be implemented as entry, and then we added the exit piece of it, but it's never been implemented. I've stood at the border and watched as people come in, swipe their card, they go register on a computer that they come into the United States, and an hour later the car goes back south again and doesn't have to stop because there's no exit system in place. Why not? This administration and the previous administration were not determined to complete it.

So piece after piece of this, Mr. Speaker, says that it's another empty promise, and they tell us we are going to fix the immigration situation so that we don't have to deal with it again in our lifetime. Well, we know better. The 1986 Amnesty Act wasn't the last one; it was the promise of the next one. We've had six or seven since then.

This is a huge promise of amnesty, and it wouldn't be the last one; it would be the biggest promise for the next one. And anyone who could get into the United States before this is enacted could stay here as long as they choose, in the shadows or out. And if those in the shadows get to be great enough numbers, then we will have established that there will be another amnesty down the line.

We cannot be a Nation unless we have borders. We cannot declare we have borders unless we decide and control who comes in and who goes out. That's an important obligation. If there's going to be an America, we must preserve the rule of law. And while we're doing it, Mr. Speaker, we must also preserve and protect and respect the dignity of every human person.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I would yield back the balance of my time.

CBC HOUR: BOSTON MARATHON EXPLOSIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ROTHFUS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from New York (Mr. JEFFRIES) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, thank you very much for your recognition. Under ordinary circumstances, I would stand before you today as a member of the Congressional Black Caucus, where for the next 60 minutes the CBC would speak directly to the American people about an issue of significance that the country is confronting.

However, today, as a result of the extraordinary events that occurred a few hours ago in Boston, Massachusetts, there is no issue that is more significant than standing with the people who participated in the marathon, those runners and those observers and those first responders, who were victimized earlier today.

As President Barack Obama mentioned, this is a moment where we're not Democrats or Independents or Republicans; we're Americans. We're not Blacks, Whites, Latinos, or Asians; we're one today. And as representatives from 43 different Congressional districts across the country, the CBC would like simply to extend our thoughts and our prayers to the family members of those who died earlier today. We want to extend our great sympathies and our best wishes to those who were victimized, and we are praying for full and complete recovery.

We also, of course, want to extend our thanks and our heartfelt gratitude to those first responders who, once again, demonstrated courage under fire and bravery in the face of dangers that were seen and unforeseen.

Now, America is a great country, and whatever is revealed about the attacks that took place earlier today, we're confident that we have the resolve to continue to move forward as strong as we always have been. In the aftermath of Pearl Harbor and throughout World War II, Americans demonstrated great resolve. During the Cuban Missile Crisis, in the face of the possibility of nuclear catastrophe, Americans demonstrated great resolve. In the face of the uncertainty that followed the horrific Oklahoma City bombings, Americans demonstrated great resolve. And of course in my home city, the great city of New York, and all across this country in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks on September 11, America demonstrated great resolve this time.

No matter what the circumstances reveal about who was behind what took place earlier today, we're confident that America will continue to show tremendous resolve. Our spirit will not be broken. We're confident that law en-

forcement will identify those responsible for what took place earlier today and bring them to justice.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 2030

IN HONOR OF ISRAEL'S 65TH INDEPENDENCE DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. FRANKEL) for 30 minutes.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, tonight's Special Order is meant to honor Israel's 65th Independence Day. But first, today's horrible tragedy of Boston demands our attention.

Security officials continue to investigate the details of the incident. I know that all Americans join with us today, our thoughts and prayers for those affected, the victims, their families and the courageous first responders.

When acts like this occur, I find it even more important that we carry on and refuse to allow our lives to be dictated by those wishing ill. So, in many ways, it's fitting to discuss Israel tonight, a nation that knows all too well the pain of these tragedies. In fact, today Israelis commemorated Memorial Day to honor the memory of 24,000 Israeli men, women, and children who've been killed in terror attacks and wars over the past 65 years.

Immediately following Memorial Day, though, Israel transitions to Independence Day, when Israelis and Jews across the globe celebrate the modern-day revival of the State of Israel.

The abrupt transition from the sadness of Memorial Day to the joy and celebration of Independence Day embodies the Israeli narrative and serves as a poignant lesson in resilience.

Sixty-five years ago, Israel began as a modest nation of 800,000 people, fighting for its very survival. Today, Israel's population stands at over 8 million. It's a thriving liberal democracy, the homeland for Jewish people, a global economic and high-tech powerhouse and maintains the region's most powerful military force.

Sixty-five years ago, this success was not guaranteed and at times seemed almost unobtainable. Memorial Day, which just ended tonight, and Holocaust Remembrance Day, which was commemorated last week, are potent reminders of the struggles the Jewish people have faced and continue to face.

The story of the Jewish people is riddled with triumph and tragedy, and Israel's national anthem, called "Hatikva," meaning "The Hope," sings of the 2,000-year-old dream to be free, people in a land of our own after centuries of pogroms and inquisitions and genocide. That dream has been realized in the establishment of the State of Israel.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce and bring up a very distinguished member of our Illinois delegation, Congresswoman JAN SCHAKOWSKY.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Thank you so much for organizing this Special Order. I want to thank my colleague, Representative FRANKEL from Florida, for bringing us together. I notice we're wearing the colors of the Israeli flag today in celebration of the 65th birthday, the anniversary of the State of Israel.

I, too, when I walked over to the Capitol, our gleaming Capitol today, I saw our flag at half-mast, recognizing the tragedy that happened in Boston today; and I, too, want to acknowledge and give my condolences to those families of the two that we know that have been lost, have been killed, and I wish well the dozens more that have been injured. I do believe in what the President said, that whoever did this will be brought to justice.

So, along with Israelis and their friends around the world, we are also at a moment of celebration, celebrating the renewal of the Jewish state in the land of Israel. For 65 years, our two nations have enjoyed a close friendship as well as a strategic alliance.

Since the United States became the first country to recognize Israel a mere 11 minutes after her founding, President Truman recognized Israel as a state, and that relationship and that bond has continued to grow and strengthen. Rooted in shared ideals and dreams, as well as common global threats, the United States-Israel relationship remains as critical today as it was in 1948.

As a Jew and a Member of Congress, I have a strong personal connection to the State of Israel, and I'm committed to continuously working to grow and strengthen that U.S.-Israel relationship. And even in the face of terrorism and war, Israel has become a leader in technology and energy and scientific innovation.

Those people who haven't gone ought to go and see the spirit of Israel, despite the relentless years of war and attack and terrorist bombings. This is a resilient people looking to find joy in everyday life and looking forward to the future.

I traveled to Israel this past February, and like I had been on previous trips, I was struck for the need for a peaceful future for the Israeli people. It's my wish today, on the celebration of the anniversary, that the years to come will show a time of peace. We need peace.

Israelis paused on Remembrance Day, which ended at sunset in Israel, to

commemorate the over 20,000 Israelis who have given their lives in defense of the Jewish state, as well as the thousands more that were killed in terrorist attacks. Even as we celebrate Israel's history, we remember those who gave their lives for their country.

As we continue to stand with the Israeli Government in the face of threats and terrorism, I strongly believe that the United States must also continue to work together with our Israeli partners to ensure a secure and peaceful future for Israel and for the entire Middle East. Israel is our closest friend and ally in the turbulent Middle East region, and the U.S. Congress remains committed to a safe and secure future for the Israeli people.

There aren't a whole lot of things I can say with confidence that represent both sides of the aisle, but I can say that the support for the State of Israel truly is a bipartisan, a nonpartisan issue for Members of Congress. For over six decades, the U.S.-Israel relationship has been fortified by this bipartisan understanding about the critical importance of the relationship to both countries. So today, Congresswoman FRANKEL, as we celebrate the 65th anniversary of the establishment of the State of Israel, we remain committed to a safe and secure future for Israel.

Thank you so much for allowing me to participate in this wonderful hour of celebration.

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Thank you very much, Congresswoman SCHAKOWSKY.

We're also joined here today by a newcomer to Congress, but very much a rising star, my neighbor and friend in the Palm Beach County delegation and the distinguished colleague who is on the House Financial Services Committee and Small Business Committee and I know recently took a trip to Israel, Congressman PATRICK MURPHY.

□ 2040

Mr. MURPHY of Florida. Thank you, Congresswoman FRANKEL.

First, I want to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt condolences to all of those affected by the tragedy that occurred earlier today in Boston. My heart goes out to all the friends and families of those involved during this most difficult time.

I also want to take this opportunity to celebrate the 65th anniversary of the declaration of the State of Israel. Since David Ben-Gurion declared the establishment of the State of Israel on April 26, 1948, the United States and Israel have maintained an unbreakable bond. This bond is rooted in our shared values and common goals of democracy, freedom and a desire for peace. In this time of difficult security challenges and economic concerns, this partnership is more important than ever to the prosperity of both nations.

Bilateral trade between the United States and our ally Israel creates jobs here at home and contributes to the

American economy. The United States' trade with Israel has reached over \$40 billion, and Israel accounts for 25 percent of U.S. exports to the Middle East. The United States and Israel share a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship that has attracted leading technology companies like Intel, Microsoft, and Google to Israel. At the same time, tens of thousands of jobs in the United States are created by Israeli companies, and Israel has the third most companies on the NASDAQ stock exchange.

In just 65 years, Israel has accomplished extraordinary achievements. Whether in technology, business, agriculture, or defense, Israel's innovations and advancements contribute to the daily lives of all Americans. For example, some of the most important technology we use every day, including instant messenger, voice mail, and computer processor, were developed in Israel. Additionally, Israeli medical advances are saving lives here in the U.S. and around the world, and Israeli-developed military technologies are protecting American troops stationed in the Middle East.

Mr. Speaker, our partnership with Israel is not just an investment in American jobs and American prosperity; it is an investment in freedom and democracy. Simply put, investing in Israel is investing in America, and we must continue to maintain our strong relationship with the State of Israel. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Israel on her 65th Independence Day and in reaffirming the lasting partnership between our two countries.

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Thank you, Mr. MURPHY.

Now I have the privilege of introducing the distinguished ranking member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, ELIOT ENGEL, from the great State of New York.

Mr. ENGEL. I thank the gentlewoman from Florida.

Let me say, as the ranking member on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, I really want everyone to know what a valued member of our committee the gentlewoman from Florida is. She is a new Member of Congress, but we value her opinions and thoughts and hard work on our committee. I know she has got a very bright future on our committee and in Congress, and I thank her for inviting me to participate in this very important Special Order.

As we've heard, Mr. Speaker, from so many of our colleagues who have spoken, the United States and Israel have much in common. Israel is the only democracy in the Middle East. The United States, of course, is the oldest democracy in the world. We have similar values. The standard of living of citizens in both our countries is higher than in most of the world, and Israel and the United States share common concerns.

Israel is celebrating its 65th birthday, a celebration of the holiday of

Yom Ha'Atzmaut, and I think all Americans want to congratulate the people of Israel for persevering in a very, very dangerous neighborhood and in a very, very dangerous environment.

Earlier today, we had a terrible tragedy in the United States, in Boston, in which lives were lost, in what seems to be a bombing, or a potential terrorist attack. I don't want to jump to conclusions, but that's the way it appears. As a New Yorker who lived through September 11, 2001, terrorism is something that, whenever it raises, or rears, its ugly head, all people of goodwill must condemn it. The people of Israel have lived through that—have lived through bombings of busses and bombings of pizza shops and bombings of weddings and just random bombings of people who care not about life but who care about death. So we pause, of course, for the loss of life in Boston today, and we understand that, when Israel has gone through terrorist attacks, there has been a similar crying out of wanton acts of terror.

I just came back a few weeks ago from Israel. I had the honor of traveling there with President Obama, and the President, of course, is working feverishly to try to move towards a two-state solution, which all of us believe is the best thing that could happen—a Palestinian state and an Israel Jewish state. Certainly, the United States will always stand by its ally Israel. I'll be going back to the region in a couple of weeks, visiting Israel again with senior members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee and of the other relevant committees because we realize how important it is to continue to keep the relationship between the U.S. and Israel.

It has been a very strong partnership, and it has been a good partnership. Israel is one of the greatest supporters of the United States in the United Nations and elsewhere, and of course the United States is one of the greatest supporters of Israel. Iron Dome, which is saving countless Israeli civilian lives, has been funded for and provided for by the United States, and the United States has stood by the people of Israel in its constant fight against terrorism.

I am just so happy that we are celebrating Israel's 65th birthday. I guess that makes Israel a senior citizen these days. Israel is obviously a very new country but of people in a very, very old land. Israel is the ancient Jewish homeland, and the rebirth of the Jewish state in 1948 is a miracle for all to behold.

So I am very, very proud of the relationship that we in the United States have with the State of Israel and the people of Israel. I am very proud that we have strong supporters of Israel on both sides of the aisle. Israel, as Ms. SCHAKOWSKY said before, is a bipartisan or a nonpartisan issue in that people, Democrats and Republicans, understand that Israel's fight for democracy, against terrorism and for its people is really the same fight that we have here in the United States.

Again, I want to thank the gentlewoman from Florida for including me in this, and I look forward to continuing to work with her on the Foreign Affairs Committee and in Congress on this issue and on so many other issues of importance to the people of the United States.

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Thank you very much, Congressman ENGEL, and thank you for your great leadership to us in Congress.

Now I am very pleased to yield to another new Member of Congress, a colleague of mine in the class of 2013 and a colleague of mine on the Foreign Affairs Committee and on the Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa, from the great State of Illinois, BRAD SCHNEIDER.

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Thank you. It is an honor to speak in celebration of Yom Ha'Atzmaut, the 65th anniversary of the birth of Israel, and of the partnership between our country and the country of Israel for all of those 65 years. I am proud that the United States was one of the first countries to recognize the new state 65 years ago and that our bond has continued to grow.

I had the privilege of being in Israel 15 years ago for the Jubilee celebration—to see the vibrancy of the country and the hopes for prosperity and peace in the region that were shared by so many of the people—and as we come forward 15 years, to see that the partnership between the United States and Israel has continued to grow, as was mentioned earlier, in so many different aspects: on security and defense as well as economically and culturally. We are sharing technologies. We are sharing experiences. We have a special bond built on common values and a common dream of a better world for our children, and we are contributing to the world in so many different ways.

□ 2050

I was in Israel 3 years ago, and I had a chance to see some of the new technologies that were emerging, both with electric cars and some of the medical technologies; and you see the partnership with the United States and Israel in technology is contributing to the entire world. In medical aspects you see where research is being collaboratively done between our country and researchers in Israel, working to find cures for disease to ease the pain and burdens of families and individuals who are afflicted with different diseases, cancers, and other types. This is something that's a beacon to the rest of the world.

My district in Illinois, the 10th Congressional District of Illinois, is home to many people who have family in Israel, who travel to Israel. Our connection to Israel is not strictly political; it is personal. And the relationship we have and will continue to have is a special bond that I'm pleased and honored to be able to represent.

With you, being a member of the Middle East and North Africa Com-

mittee, being a life-long advocate for a strong U.S.-Israel relationship, it is a great distinction and honor for me to stand here to celebrate Yom Ha'Atzmaut, the 65th anniversary for Israel. I am honored to be going to Israel again in 2 weeks with members of the Chicago community. We will be going throughout the country. We will have a chance to visit Iron Dome, I will have a chance to visit Sderot, and places where Israel is at the front lines of a battle that is ours together.

So I am proud and honored to represent Illinois here in the United States House of Representatives knowing that the bond, the connection, between the United States and Israel is sound, secure, and permanent.

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Thank you very much, Mr. SCHNEIDER.

Tonight, we have had a very good, I think, discussion here because in Israel, as we speak, Israelis dressed in blue and white flood the streets for ceremonies and parties to celebrate all that Israel has accomplished. And what a lesson we have learned because even in our sadness in our hearts tonight for the people in Boston, we can learn from Israel the resilience of how to come back from tragedy.

I thank both of you, Mr. SCHNEIDER and Mr. MURPHY, for reminding us that Israel is not just to be known for a place of trouble and conflict. They have developed some of the leading universities in the world, boast the highest ratio of university degrees to population. And as Mr. MURPHY mentioned, it is oft been labeled "the start-up nation" for its remarkably advanced entrepreneurial economy and is among the world's leaders in high-tech industry and is at the forefront of research and development in the field of renewable energy sources.

And most incredibly, even as Israel struggles to protect and care for its own population, Israel regularly sends humanitarian aid, search and rescue teams, mobile hospitals, and other emergency supplies to help victims of disasters around the world.

We know that Israel has its share of difficulties, as every country does; but despite the current impasse for the peace process, the majority of Israelis continue to show support for a two-state solution.

So as we conclude tonight, I want to say that I know on a personal note, as a mother of a combat veteran, I know too well the pain and fear and lying awake at night wondering if your child will come home safe. That's the feeling that parents in Israel often have. That is the reason I know that I will work with Mr. SCHNEIDER, Mr. ENGEL, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, and the rest of my colleagues here in what I am so happy to say is a bipartisan way to strengthen the United States-Israel relationship.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I just want to say happy birthday to the State of Israel.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Jewish state of Israel on

Israel's Independence Day, Yom Ha'atzmaut. I am proud to join many other colleagues in the United States Congress in honoring the strength of the US-Israel friendship and the shining example that Israel gives as America's most reliable partner in the region.

Last month, when President Obama visited Israel, Prime Minister Netanyahu gave him a special gift, a nano-chip, designed and created by Technion scientists. Set against the backdrop of a Jerusalem stone, this nano-chip recalls the advancements of Israel in the context of its ancient roots. Inscribed side by side on the nano-chip were replicas of the Declarations of Independence of the United States of America and the State of Israel.

This gift reminds us of shared values between the United States and Israel—spelled out on some of our Nations' earliest documents. In Israel, their Declaration of Independence refers to its commitment to “uphold the full social and political equality of all its citizens, without distinction of race, creed or sex” and a guarantee of “full freedom of conscience, worship, education and culture.” In the United States, centuries before, our forefathers pledged “that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.” These shared values demonstrate that the US Israel relationship can withstand the toughest challenges because the foundation of the relationship is built on enduring values.

In these uncertain times in the Middle East and North Africa, Israel seems surrounded by chaos. On one border, Israel must rely on Egypt to disrupt weapons and human smuggling into Gaza. To the North, Lebanon is politically fractured, with an avowed terrorist group, Hezbollah, in the government. In Syria, a post-Assad era seems near, yet opposition groups are becoming more closely aligned with those who seek Israel's destruction. In Jordan, the state is under tremendous burden to cope with refugees from other more unstable parts of the Middle East, leading to a shaky foundation for one of Israel's most important relationships. With an intransigent Palestinian leadership refusing to negotiate, a political solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict seems out of reach. Iran's illicit nuclear program remains an existential threat to Israel, haunting every decision that Israel's government makes.

Israel does not have to be reminded of these threats. Every year, on the day before Independence Day, Israelis mourn the loss of those who were killed in service to their country. The Israeli Memorial Day, Yom Hazikaron, is marked by the sound of a piercing siren that stops the entire country. Because everyone in Israel has been touched by the violence of the Arab-Israeli conflict—no matter how young or old.

And yet, despite these challenges across the region and the world, the Israeli people remain resilient and strong. Their economy is growing rapidly, they continue to have just and fair elections and their democracy thrives. On this Yom Ha'atzmaut, Israel has much to be proud of.

And the United States' commitment to Israel is unshakeable. As Israel faces difficult decisions ahead about peace and security, the United States will stand by its ally and friend.

I wish the people and government of Israel a Chag Sameach, a happy holiday on this 65th Independence Day.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Israel, our partner in peace and prosperity, for its 65 years of independence.

On April 14, 1948, just hours before the British Mandate was due to end, Israel's Founding Fathers and Founding Mothers, led by future David Ben-Gurion declared the birth of the State of Israel in Tel Aviv.

Many of the Jews who lived in Israel in 1948 were survivors of the Second World War and the Holocaust, which pushed international opinion for the need for a homeland for the Jewish people where they could be free from persecution and free to build a better life.

Since that fateful day in Tel Aviv, Israel and its people have worked tirelessly to build a thriving democracy that is economically prosperous and at peace with neighboring nations.

The first nation to recognize Israel's independence, I am proud to say, was the United States, which welcomed Israel into the community of nations just hours after its declaration.

The bonds between our two great nations, bound together by common interests and shared values, have only grown with time.

It is also fitting to take this occasion to speak on the future of a lasting peace. As I and my colleagues in this chamber have said repeatedly, the only path to peace is through direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians.

Mr. Speaker, I hope on this joyous day that we reflect on the need to redouble our efforts to bring peace to the region and continue to tangibly support our friend and ally in its request for peace.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the contribution of the State of Israel as it celebrates its 65th anniversary as a vibrant and open democratic society.

I had the great privilege to live and work in Israel in the mid-1960's and celebrated Israel's 22nd anniversary by taking part in a three-day walk from the shores of Tel Aviv to the hills of Jerusalem.

Now about 50 years later, I marvel at the extraordinary changes that have taken place in Israel.

In its 65 years, Israel has managed some incredible achievements.

These have been true gifts to Americans and the world—healing the sick, improving security, and promoting commerce.

Israeli doctors and researchers have produced countless medical advances.

Israelis have developed techniques to better assist cancer and Parkinson's patients.

Israelis invented the PillCam to better detect disorders of the GI Tract.

Israelis are pioneering robotic surgery.

Israelis were key to developing the cell phone—which has transformed American business and, of course, allowed many Jewish mothers, like myself, to instantly get in touch with their children.

Israelis also invented voice mail technology.

Israel developed the Iron Dome Missile Defense System which has already saved countless lives from missile attacks. And, Israel is sharing this vital technology with the United States.

Israel is also a leader in conservation and renewable energy. In fact, Israel is the only

country in the world that entered the 21st century with a net gain in its number of trees, made more remarkable because this was achieved in an area considered mainly desert.

And, Israel continues to be a shining example of democratic governance in the Middle East.

Israel is the only country in the Middle East with protections for free speech, free press, free practice of religion, women's rights and gay rights.

All citizens of Israel have full voting rights without regard to race, sex, or ethnicity.

And, Israel's parliament, the Knesset, includes Jews and Arabs alike as members.

Israel is a small country in a hostile environment that has found a way to accomplish big things.

We as Americans are better off today because of Israel's existence.

And, as I wish Israel and her citizens a happy 65th birthday, I stress that I will continue working with my colleagues to support our closest friend and ally, as it continues to inspire the world with its achievement.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, tonight many of my colleagues will be participating in a special order in observance of Yom Ha'atzmaut, Israel's Independence Day.

I want to join them in celebration and wish the Israeli people a very happy and blessed 65 years of independence.

The road traveled by the people of Israel required extraordinary and unimaginable sacrifice.

And still this struggle continues every day for Jewish people in countries across the world.

I am proud to stand with Israel and continue our nation's support of democracy and peace in the Middle East.

A personal hero of mine, President Truman, bonded our countries together when he made the United States the first nation to recognize the State of Israel.

Since that time we've worked together to promote peace in the region and stand up to threats and acts of aggression.

Today Israel faces new challenges and uncertainty. But by acting together the United States and Israel can—and will—overcome.

Again, I would like to offer my sincere congratulations to Israel on its 65th year of independence, and my hope that we will continue to strive towards a stable and peaceful Middle East and North Africa.

Ms. ESTY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate America's great friend and ally, Israel, and the people of Israel, on the 65th anniversary of their independence.

Mr. Speaker, as a student, in the 1980's, I was incredibly fortunate to have the opportunity to travel to Israel. I learned a lot from that journey. There are few places I have been to in my life as vibrant and dynamic as that nation. I was impressed, as I think most visitors are, by the great optimism and resilience of the Israeli people—optimism and resilience that they showed even during a time of extreme uncertainty.

And I was also struck by how small, and how vulnerable, Israel is geographically. On a clear day, you can stand on top of the Golan Heights and see from one end of the country to another. Right before your eyes, you can see the fragility of the country's security—whose defense is a great credit to the Israeli people.

Right before your eyes, you see a strong, but geographically small country, a country not protected by oceans, a country with many hostile neighbors, a country that has been bravely defending itself from terrorist and military attacks repeatedly since its independence.

My visit to Israel dramatically increased my appreciation for Israel and helped define my own views about the importance of their security and our nation's special relationship with Israel. Our shared national interests and our shared values of democracy, peace, and liberty have defined that relationship for 65 years now and will continue to define that relationship into the future.

I'm proud to join my colleagues of both parties in expressing a renewed commitment to that special relationship and to Israel's security, in honoring Israel's history, in expressing our best wishes for Israel's continued accomplishments, and in offering our congratulations to the Israeli people on this significant anniversary.

Congratulations to our dear friends in Israel on the 65th anniversary of your nation's independence.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. HONDA (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of official business.

Ms. MOORE (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of medical reasons.

Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California (at the request of Mr. CANTOR) for today and the balance of the week on account of family business.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 8 o'clock and 55 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, April 16, 2013, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

1099. A letter from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Importation of Live Birds and Poultry, Poultry Meat, and Poultry Products From a Region in the European Union [Docket No.: APHIS-2009-0094] (RIN: 0579-AD45) received April 2, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

1100. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Styrene-Ethylene-Propylene Block Copolymer; Tolerance Exemption [EPA-HQ-OPP-2013-0043; FRL-9380-5] received April 5, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

1101. A letter from the Acting Principal Deputy, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's annual report for 2012 on the STARBASE Program, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 2193b(g); to the Committee on Armed Services.

1102. A letter from the Chairman, Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council, transmitting the Council's Annual Report for 2012; to the Committee on Financial Services.

1103. A letter from the Administrator, Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Amendment to Rule Filing Requirements for Dually-Registered Clearing Agencies [Release No.: 34-69284; File No.: S7-29-11] (RIN: 3235-AL18) received April 8, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

1104. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy and Management Staff, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Service of Process on Manufacturers; Manufacturers Importing Electronic Products Into the United States; Agent Designation; Change of Address [Docket No.: FDA-2007-N-0091] (formerly 2007N-0104) received April 2, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1105. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy and Management Staff, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Medical Devices; Technical Amendment [Docket No.: FDA-2013-N-0011] received April 2, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1106. A letter from the Program Manager, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Medicaid Program; Increased Federal Medical Assistance Percentage Changes under the Affordable Care Act of 2010 [CMS-2327-FC] (RIN: 0938-AR38) received April 1, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1107. A letter from the Deputy Bureau, Wireline Competition Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Connect America Fund; High Cost Universal Service Support [WC Docket No.: 10-90] [WC Docket No.: 05-337] received April 2, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1108. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Notification of the intention to exercise the authority under Section 552(c)(2) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, to authorize the drawdown to the Syrian Opposition Coalition and the Supreme Military Council; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1109. A letter from the Director, Equal Employment Opportunity and Inclusion, Farm Credit System Insurance Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's annual report for FY 2012 prepared in accordance with the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1110. A letter from the Chairman, Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission, transmitting the Commission's annual report for Fiscal Year 2012 prepared in accordance with Section 203 of the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act), Public Law 107-174; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1111. A letter from the Chair, Recovery Accountability and Transparency Board, transmitting the Board's annual report for FY 2012 prepared in accordance with Section 203

of the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act), Public Law 107-174; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1112. A letter from the Federal Liaison Officer, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Changes to Representation of Others Before The United States Patent and Trademark Office [Docket No.: PTO-C-2012-0034] (RIN: 0651-AC81) received April 2, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

1113. A letter from the Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Department of Justice, transmitting the 2012 Biennial Report on the Effectiveness of Grant Programs under the Violence Against Women Act; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

1114. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Annual Report to Congress and the National Transportation Safety Board Responding to Issues on the National Transportation Safety Board's 2013 Most Wanted List; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1115. A letter from the Chairman, Federal Maritime Commission, transmitting the Commission's 51st annual report of activities for fiscal year 2012; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1116. A letter from the Director of Regulation Policy and Management, Office of the General Counsel, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's final rule — Grants for Transportation of Veterans in Highly Rural Areas (RIN: 2900-A001) received April 2, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

1117. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Appeals Settlement Guidelines — New York State Qualified Empire Zone Enterprise Credit Real Property Taxes received April 8, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

1118. A letter from the Chairman, Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board, transmitting the Board's Twenty-Third Annual Report to Congress on health and safety activities; jointly to the Committees on Armed Services and Energy and Commerce.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. ROGERS of Michigan: Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. H.R. 624. A bill to provide for the sharing of certain cyber threat intelligence and cyber threat information between the intelligence community and cybersecurity entities, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 113-39). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union,

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. PITTS (for himself, Mr. BURGESS, and Mrs. WAGNER):

H.R. 1549. A bill to amend Public Law 111-148 to transfer fiscal year 2013 through fiscal year 2016 funds from the Prevention and Public Health Fund to carry out the temporary high risk health insurance pool program for

individuals with preexisting conditions, and to extend access to such program to such individuals who have had creditable coverage during the 6 months prior to application for coverage through such program; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. KILDEE (for himself and Mr. TURNER):

H.R. 1550. A bill to allow use of assistance under the Hardest Hit Fund program under the Troubled Assets Relief Program of the Department of the Treasury for demolition of foreclosed-upon properties and related expenses; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. MEEKS (for himself, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. SESSIONS, and Mr. CLAY):

H.R. 1551. A bill to amend the Consumer Credit Protection Act to assure meaningful disclosures of the terms of rental-purchase agreements, including disclosures of all costs to consumers under such agreements, to provide certain substantive rights to consumers under such agreements, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan:

H.R. 1552. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow the transfer of required minimum distributions from a retirement plan to a health savings account; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. CAPITO (for herself, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. CARNEY, Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan, Mr. LUCAS, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. BARR, Ms. MOORE, Mr. ROSS, Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. HURT, Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. GRIMM, Mr. STIVERS, Mrs. BACHMANN, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. GARRETT, Mr. FINCHER, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. ROYCE, Mr. POSEY, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. DUFFY, and Mr. NEUGEBAUER):

H.R. 1553. A bill to improve the examination of depository institutions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. DOGGETT (for himself, Ms. BASS, Mr. BECERRA, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. CAPUANO, Ms. CHU, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. DEFAZIO, Ms. DEGETTE, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. DINGELL, Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. FARR, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. HUFFMAN, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. McDERMOTT, Mr. McGOVERN, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Ms. MOORE, Mr. MORAN, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. PETERS of Michigan, Mr. RUSH, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. SHERMAN, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. TIERNEY, Mr. TONKO, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. WELCH, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. HOLT, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. PAYNE, and Mr. COHEN):

H.R. 1554. A bill to restrict the use of offshore tax havens and abusive tax shelters to inappropriately avoid Federal taxation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Financial Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. DOGGETT (for himself, Ms. BASS, Mr. BECERRA, Ms. CHU, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. DEFAZIO, Ms. DEGETTE, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. DINGELL, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. McDERMOTT, Mr. McGOVERN, Mr. MORAN, Mr. RUSH, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. TONKO, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. GARAMENDI, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. PAYNE, and Mr. COHEN):

H.R. 1555. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reduce international tax avoidance and restore a level playing field for American businesses; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. DOGGETT (for himself, Mr. DEFAZIO, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. DINGELL, Mr. MORAN, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. RUSH, Mr. GARAMENDI, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. McDERMOTT, Mr. CICILLINE, and Mr. COHEN):

H.R. 1556. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to prevent corporations from exploiting tax treaties to evade taxation of United States income; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. BRALEY of Iowa:

H.R. 1557. A bill to ensure clarity of regulations to improve the effectiveness of Federal regulatory programs while decreasing burdens on the regulated public; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. COLLINS of New York:

H.R. 1558. A bill to lower health premiums and increase choice for small businesses; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. GABBARD (for herself and Ms. HANABUSA):

H.R. 1559. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide health care practitioners in rural areas with training in preventive health care, including both physical and mental care, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. GARCIA (for himself, Mr. RADEL, and Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN):

H.R. 1560. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to authorize the Internal Revenue Service to permit truncated social security numbers on wage reporting provided to employees; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. GARDNER:

H.R. 1561. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to make improvements to support facilities for National Historic Sites operated by the National Park Service, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. GIBSON (for himself, Mr. REED, Mr. OWENS, and Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York):

H.R. 1562. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to simplify the petitioning procedure for H-2A workers, to expand the scope of the H-2A program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. GUTHRIE (for himself and Ms. CASTOR of Florida):

H.R. 1563. A bill to enable concrete masonry products manufacturers to establish, finance, and carry out a coordinated program of research, education, and promotion to improve, maintain, and develop markets

for concrete masonry products; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. HURT (for himself and Mr. MEEKS):

H.R. 1564. A bill to amend the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 to prohibit the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board from requiring public companies to use specific auditors or require the use of different auditors on a rotating basis; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. KING of New York (for himself, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. MEEHAN, Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, and Mr. DEFAZIO):

H.R. 1565. A bill to protect Second Amendment rights, ensure that all individuals who should be prohibited from buying a firearm are listed in the National Instant Criminal Background Check System, and provide a responsible and consistent background check process; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER (for himself and Mr. MEEKS):

H.R. 1566. A bill to create a Federal charter for Internet consumer credit corporations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. MULVANEY (for himself, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. JORDAN, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. POMPEO, Mr. PRICE of Georgia, Mr. RIBBLE, Mr. AMASH, Mr. MEADOWS, and Mr. SALMON):

H.R. 1567. A bill to eliminate corporate welfare programs of the Department of Agriculture, the Department of the Interior, the Department of Transportation, and other Federal agencies; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committees on Ways and Means, Agriculture, Natural Resources, Financial Services, and Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. NADLER (for himself, Mrs. LOWEY, and Mr. ISRAEL):

H.R. 1568. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for adjustments in the individual income tax rates to reflect regional differences in the cost-of-living; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. POMPEO (for himself, Mr. AMASH, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. MULVANEY, Mr. RIBBLE, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. JORDAN, Mr. MEADOWS, and Mr. PRICE of Georgia):

H.R. 1569. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to terminate certain energy tax subsidies and lower the corporate income tax rate; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. RICHMOND:

H.R. 1570. A bill to amend title 31, United States Code, to provide for the regulation of tax return preparers; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. SCALISE (for himself, Mr. YODER, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. MULVANEY, Mr. FLORES, Mr. PITTS, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. PERRY, Mr. GRAVES of Georgia, Mr. STUTZMAN, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Mr. YOHO, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. MESSER, Mr. FLEMING, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. ROKITA, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. DESJARLAIS, and Mrs. HARTZLER):

H.R. 1571. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for taxpayers

making donations with their returns of income tax to the Federal Government to pay down the public debt; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. SCHOCK:

H.R. 1572. A bill to prohibit the use of Federal money for print, radio, television or any other media advertisement, campaign, or form of publicity against the use of a food or beverage that is lawfully marketed under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. SIRE (for himself, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. HONDA, Mr. PETRI, and Mr. KENNEDY):

H.R. 1573. A bill to amend the Peace Corps Act to allow former volunteers to use the seal, emblem, or name of Peace Corps on death announcements and grave stones; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. TURNER:

H.R. 1574. A bill to amend the Dayton Aviation Heritage Preservation Act of 1992 to rename a site of the park; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. YODER (for himself, Mr. POMPEO, Ms. JENKINS, and Mr. CLEAVER):

H.R. 1575. A bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to require a provider of a commercial mobile service or an IP-enabled voice service to provide call location information concerning the user of such a service to law enforcement agencies in order to respond to a call for emergency services or in an emergency situation that involves risk of death or serious physical harm; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. NEUGEBAUER:

H.J. Res. 39. A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. RUNYAN (for himself and Mr. SCHNEIDER):

H. Con. Res. 31. Concurrent resolution supporting Rare Pituitary Disease Awareness; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. GARDNER (for himself, Mr. PETERS of Michigan, Mr. FLORES, Mr. RENACCI, Mr. HANNA, Mr. CARNEY, Mr. COFFMAN, Mr. BARBER, Mr. DELANEY, Mr. HIMES, Mr. POLIS, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. TERRY, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. GERLACH, Mr. BENISHEK, Mr. YODER, and Mr. LANCE):

H. Res. 160. A resolution amending the Rules of the House of Representatives to require authorizing committees to hold annual hearings on GAO investigative reports on the identification, consolidation, and elimination of duplicative Government programs; to the Committee on Rules.

By Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky (for himself, Mr. KEATING, Mr. WOLF, Mr. RAHALL, Mr. GRIMM, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. TIERNEY, and Mr. ADERHOLT):

H. Res. 161. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the Food and Drug Administration should encourage the use of abuse-deterrent formulations of drugs; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. PITTS:

H.R. 1549.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. KILDEE:

H.R. 1550.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. MEEKS:

H.R. 1551.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of United States Constitution.

By Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan:

H.R. 1552.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mrs. CAPITO:

H.R. 1553.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Commerce Clause, Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the Constitution states that Congress shall have power to regulate the regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

By Mr. DOGGETT:

H.R. 1554.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. DOGGETT:

H.R. 1555.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution and Amendment XVI of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. DOGGETT:

H.R. 1556.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution and Amendment XVI of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. BRALEY of Iowa:

H.R. 1557.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. COLLINS of New York:

H.R. 1558.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill makes specific changes to existing law in a manner that returns power to the States and to the People, consistent with Amendment X of the United States Constitution.

By Ms. GABBARD:

H.R. 1559.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The U.S. Constitution including Article 1, Section 8.

By Mr. GARCIA:

H.R. 1560.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1, Section 8 of Article 1 of the United States Constitution, which reads: "The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts, and Excises, to pay the Debts, and provide for the common Defense and General Welfare of the United States; but all Duties and Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States."

Clause 18, Section 8, Article 1 of the United States Constitution, which reads: "The Congress shall have Power . . . To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States or in any Department or Officer thereof."

By Mr. GARDNER:

H.R. 1561.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2

By Mr. GIBSON:

H.R. 1562.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 3 and 4, of Section 8, of Article I.

By Mr. GUTHRIE:

H.R. 1563.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes;

By Mr. HURT:

H.R. 1564.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3.

By Mr. KING of New York:

H.R. 1565.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 6

The Congress shall have Power . . . To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:

H.R. 1566.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the explicit power of Congress to regulate commerce in and among the states, as enumerate in Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3, the Commerce Clause, of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. MULVANEY:

H.R. 1567.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1. "The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States."

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18. "To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof."

By Mr. NADLER:

H.R. 1568.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Art. 1, sec. 8, cl. 1 "Congress shall have the Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises. . . ."

Art. 1, sec. 8, cl. 18 Necessary and proper clause.

By Mr. POMPEO:

H.R. 1569.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

By Mr. RICHMOND:

H.R. 1570.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Constitutional authority for this bill stems from Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution and Amendment XVI of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. SCALISE:

H.R. 1571.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. SCHOCK:

H.R. 1572.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress as stated in Article I, Section 9, Clause 7 and Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. SIRES:

H.R. 1573.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. TURNER:

H.R. 1574.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clauses 1 and 18; and Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Mr. YODER:

H.R. 1575.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clauses 1 and 3.

The Congress shall have power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States;

To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes;

By Mr. NEUGEBAUER:

H.J. Res. 39.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 3: Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. SCHOCK, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. LATHAM, Mr. GRAVES of Georgia, and Mr. THORNBERRY.

H.R. 32: Ms. ESTY and Mr. LUCAS.

H.R. 38: Mr. HECK of Nevada, Mr. MULVANEY, Mr. GUTHRIE, and Mr. CALVERT.

H.R. 124: Mr. KLINE and Mr. COBLE.

H.R. 125: Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee.

H.R. 129: Ms. SPEIER, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, and Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois.

H.R. 135: Mr. BERA of California.

H.R. 136: Mr. BERA of California.

H.R. 139: Ms. DELBENE.

H.R. 200: Mrs. NAPOLITANO.

H.R. 207: Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. CASSIDY, and Mr. GIBBS.

H.R. 208: Ms. LEE of California.

H.R. 236: Mrs. NAPOLITANO.

H.R. 279: Mr. MULLIN.

H.R. 318: Mr. GRIFFITH of Virginia.

H.R. 324: Mr. KENNEDY.

H.R. 333: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. KILMER, and Mr. TURNER.

H.R. 351: Mr. WHITFIELD and Mr. RICE of South Carolina.

H.R. 377: Mr. NEAL and Mr. SABLAN.

H.R. 503: Mr. STEWART.

H.R. 556: Mr. LABRADOR and Mr. NEUGEBAUER.

H.R. 569: Mrs. WALORSKI.

H.R. 570: Mr. COURTNEY.

H.R. 624: Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. THORNBERRY, Mr. UPTON, Mr. WALDEN, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. NUNES, Mr. POMPEO, Mr. PETERS of California, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. LANCE, Mr. LOBIONDO, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. HECK of Nevada, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. MCHENRY, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. KLINE, Mr. SCHOCK, Mr. MULVANEY, Mr. HASTINGS of Washington, Mr. CAMP, Mr. COLE, Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois, Mr. AMODEI, Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. COSTA, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. KILMER, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. ENYART, Mr. GUTIERREZ, and Mr. VARGAS.

H.R. 627: Mr. HONDA, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. LUCAS, and Mr. KING of Iowa.

H.R. 629: Mr. HORSFORD.

H.R. 630: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia and Mr. CASTRO of Texas.

H.R. 655: Mr. RENACCI.

H.R. 666: Mr. RUIZ.

H.R. 671: Mr. BISHOP of New York and Mr. KILMER.

H.R. 719: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska and Mr. SCHIFF.

H.R. 721: Mrs. NOEM.

H.R. 724: Mr. KILMER, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. CASSIDY, and Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois.

H.R. 730: Mr. SENSENBRENNER and Mr. BARR.

H.R. 755: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY and Mr. COOK.

H.R. 786: Mr. POCAN.

H.R. 792: Mr. MCHENRY.

H.R. 798: Ms. TITUS and Mrs. BEATTY.

H.R. 800: Mr. NUGENT and Mrs. ELLMERS.

H.R. 826: Mr. COOPER.

H.R. 850: Mr. GARCIA, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. LUCAS, Mr. COHEN, Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California, Mr. HARPER, and Mr. GARAMENDI.

H.R. 851: Mr. MCGOVERN.

H.R. 920: Mr. TIBERI and Mr. LUCAS.

H.R. 924: Mr. VAN HOLLEN.

H.R. 940: Mr. DUFFY.

H.R. 956: Mr. ROHRBACHER, Mr. MCINTYRE, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. RICHMOND, and Mr. PERLMUTTER.

H.R. 961: Mr. THOMPSON of California and Mr. WELCH.

H.R. 962: Ms. LOFGREN and Mr. WELCH.

H.R. 984: Mrs. BLACKBURN.

H.R. 1012: Mr. NADLER, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, and Ms. WILSON of Florida.

H.R. 1020: Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. MULVANEY, Mr. AMODEI, and Mr. COLE.

H.R. 1024: Mr. DEFAZIO.

H.R. 1026: Mr. STOCKMAN, Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, and Mr. CONAWAY.

H.R. 1038: Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. DEFAZIO, and Ms. MATSUI.

H.R. 1076: Mr. COTTON.

H.R. 1100: Mr. RUIZ.

H.R. 1148: Mr. WITTMAN and Mr. KING of Iowa.

H.R. 1151: Mr. GRAVES of Missouri.

H.R. 1181: Mr. COBLE.

H.R. 1201: Mr. LATHAM and Mr. ELLISON.

H.R. 1211: Mr. QUIGLEY.

H.R. 1229: Ms. LEE of California, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Ms. CLARKE.

H.R. 1242: Mr. LABRADOR and Mr. BENTIVOLIO.

H.R. 1250: Ms. LEE of California.

H.R. 1252: Mr. MICHAUD.

H.R. 1263: Mr. RUNYAN and Mr. BARBER.

H.R. 1265: Mr. VARGAS and Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD.

H.R. 1281: Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky.

H.R. 1289: Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. TAKANO, Ms. JACKSON LEE, and Ms. SLAUGHTER.

H.R. 1322: Ms. SHEA-PORTER.

H.R. 1330: Mr. VARGAS.

H.R. 1344: Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Ms. BORDALLO, Ms. HAHN, Mr. CARDENAS, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, and Mr. GRIMM.

H.R. 1371: Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico.

H.R. 1386: Mr. GIBBS, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. MULVANEY, and Mr. PEARCE.

H.R. 1414: Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. TIERNEY, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, and Mr. POLIS.

H.R. 1416: Mr. HECK of Nevada, Mr. BROWN of Georgia, Mr. HUNTER, Mr. YODER, Mr. RADEL, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, Mr. JONES, Mr. COBLE, Mr. CARTER, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. GIBBS, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mrs. BACHMANN, Mr. MCHENRY, Mr. ROONEY, Ms. JACKSON LEE, and Mr. ROE of Tennessee.

H.R. 1417: Mr. HUDSON and Mr. STEWART.

H.R. 1460: Mrs. WAGNER.

H.R. 1466: Mr. DOGETT, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. SCHWARTZ, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. NADLER, Ms. BROWN of Florida, and Mr. RANGEL.

H.R. 1478: Ms. TSONGAS.

H.R. 1502: Mr. BACHUS, Mr. BRADY of Texas, and Mr. ROSKAM.

H.R. 1507: Mr. RAHALL, Mr. LATHAM, Mr. SIRES, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. KING of New York, and Mr. CONNOLLY.

H.R. 1509: Mr. DOYLE.

H.R. 1532: Mr. HUFFMAN.

H.R. 1547: Mr. SCHRADER, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. MULVANEY, and Mr. CARTWRIGHT.

H.J. Res. 31: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.

H. Con. Res. 23: Mr. KINGSTON.

H. Con. Res. 24: Mr. COBLE and Mr. COLE.

H. Con. Res. 26: Mr. FORBES.

H. Con. Res. 30: Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. PETERS of Michigan, Mr. YOHO, Mr. HALL, Mr. ENYART, Mr. POLIS, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. YODER, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. HORSFORD, Mr. RUNYAN, Mr. BACHUS, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. CHAFFETZ, Mr. WALBERG, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. SOUTHERLAND, Mr. MICHAUD, Mr. SESSIONS, Ms. FUDGE, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Ms. SPEIER, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. SCALISE, Mr. SALMON, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. NUNNELEE, Mr. OLSON, Mr. YOUNG of Florida, Mr. MARINO, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. POMPEO, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. LATTI, and Mr. SWALWELL of California.

H. Res. 30: Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi.

H. Res. 36: Mr. CRAWFORD and Mr. WENSTRUP.

H. Res. 75: Mr. BENTIVOLIO.

H. Res. 78: Ms. LOFGREN.

H. Res. 90: Mr. ANDREWS, Ms. WATERS, Mr. DELANEY, and Mr. DOYLE.

H. Res. 101: Mr. MARINO.

H. Res. 102: Mr. MCINTYRE and Mr. HASTINGS of Florida.

H. Res. 108: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.

H. Res. 112: Mr. DEFazio, Mr. WALZ, and Mr. ROE of Tennessee.

H. Res. 118: Mr. FOSTER, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, and Mr. TIERNEY.

H. Res. 124: Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. ELLISON, Ms. CLARKE, and Mr. BRALEY of Iowa.

DELETIONS OF SPONSORS FROM PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were deleted from public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 1101: Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi.